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THE  
T R I B U N E,

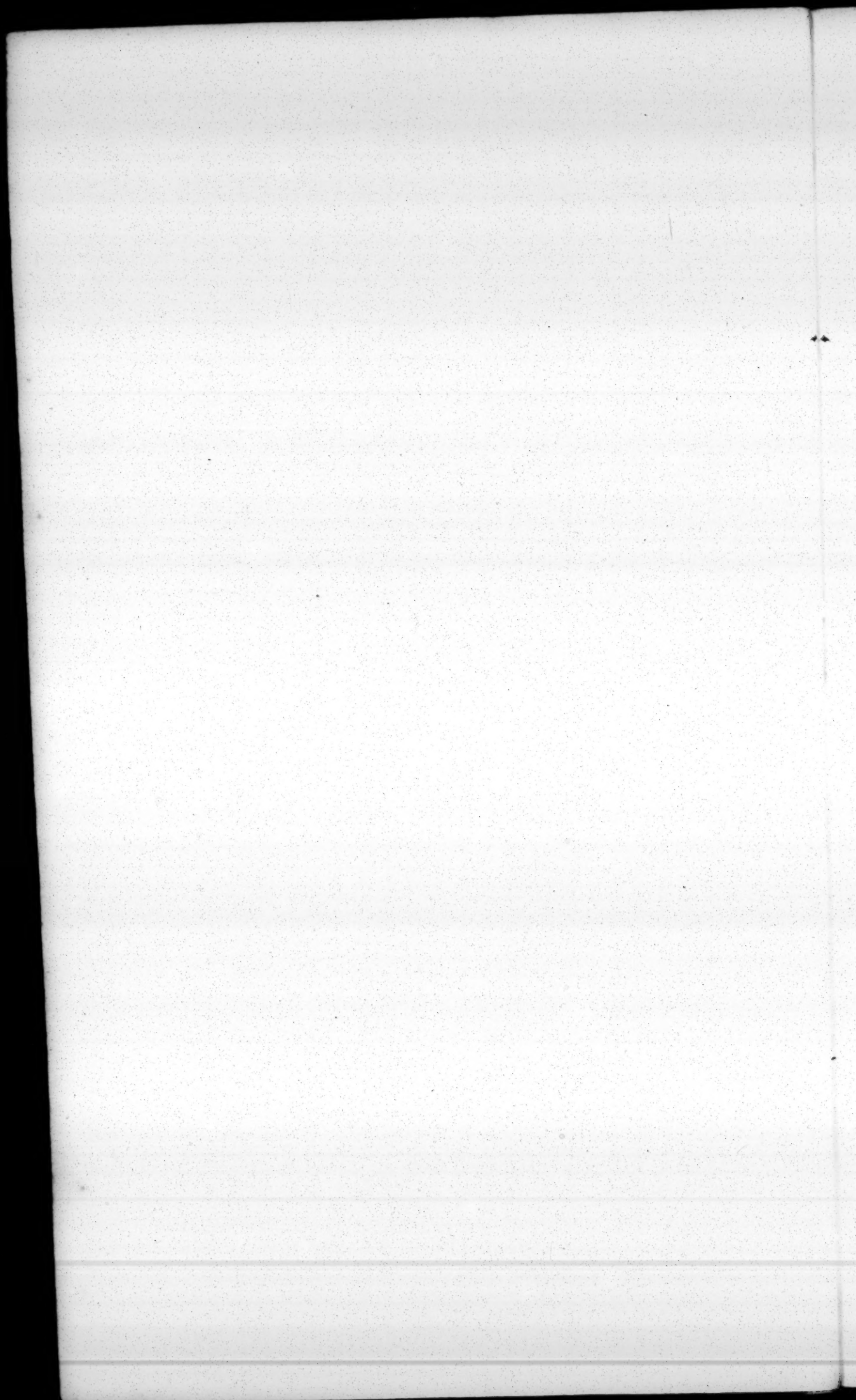
VOL. III.

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PRICE EIGHT SHILLINGS.

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THE  
T R I B U N E,

A PERIODICAL PUBLICATION,

CONSISTING CHIEFLY OF THE

POLITICAL LECTURES

OF

*J. THELWALL,*

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SECOND COURSE  
IN FEBRUARY, 1795, TO THE INTRODUCTION OF  
MR. PITT'S CONVENTION ACT.

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TAKEN IN SHORT-HAND BY W. RAMSEY, AND REVISED  
BY THE LECTURER.

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VOL. III.

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Strike: but hear!!!

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,  
AND SOLD BY H. D. SYMONDS, NO. 20, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1796.







TO THE  
 RIGHT HONORABLE  
 WILLIAM PITT, HENRY DUNDAS,  
 WILLIAM WYNDHAM,  
 AND  
 THOMAS, LORD GRENVILLE;  
 TO  
 SIR JOHN SCOTT, SIR JOHN MITFORD,  
 AND THE  
 MAJORITY OF THE TWO HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT,  
 WHO,  
*Deluded by the Misrepresentations of Government Reporters,*  
 VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE  
 BILL FOR SUPPRESSING THESE LECTURES.

I HAVE not been, ~~to~~, much practised in the writing of dedications; still less ~~have I been~~ in the habit of approaching greatness in quest of favor and protection, either for myself or my literary productions. The man who prides himself in the comfort and conscious integrity of an independent mind, must be contented to abandon all hopes of favor from the powerful and the great; and I had early the good fortune to discover, that the only truly estimable patronage is that which is *derived from the involuntary approbation of the public*. This is the only patronage reconcilable with the inflexibility of genuine independence: a patronage founded on the basis of honest and liberal reciprocity; accepted as a right, and paid as a debt, which it is at once the interest, the duty, and the pleasure of the creditor to discharge. My *natural patrons*, therefore, are those of my fellow citizens who, either from a conviction of my public integrity, an attachment to my principles, a favorable opinion of my talents, or whatever cause, have a curiosity to gratify in the perusal of my works. To these, therefore, and to these alone, in all ordinary cases, not only in essence, but in form, I shall dedicate my labors: and you, my Lords, and right—

a

Right

Right Honorable Gentlemen, whom, in the present singular instance, I approach in *unwonted strains of dedication*, will, I hope, excuse me if I declare that the patronage thus described is dearer to my heart—more inestimable in its value, than all that your united favors could bestow: not that I am by any means insensible to those honors with which, by your debates and resolutions, your wide-spread reports, your expensive pageants, and nine hours panegyrics, you have conspired to crown my otherwise obscure and humble brow. You have dragged into notice, and forced into some degree of importance, an individual whom fortune seemed only to have destined for the humbler walks of private usefulness, and who, but for the latent energies called forth by your exertions, must have dropped silently down the stream of life, beloved, perhaps, by a few for his social qualities, and crowned, at the utmost, with one simple sprig of bays, the guerdon of a novel, a dissertation, or a poem.

But it is not, I assure you, any emotion of *gratitude* for these favors that inspires the present dedication. There is a duty paramount to the little selfish reciprocations of personal favor, and which, though not so frequently at war with individual obligation as some have supposed, whenever such opposition does in reality exist, ought, invariably, to be preferred to all private considerations. This duty, my Lords and Gentlemen—nay start not at the *Sans-culotism* of my morality—this duty is PUBLIC JUSTICE!—Justice to that great mass, or aggregate body of the people, for whose welfare alone you have any claim to political existence! It is by this principle that I am stimulated to dedicate to you these volumes of Political Lectures, and, in reverence to that venerable maxim of antiquity—*better late than never*, to call your attention to a subject upon which you have already so peremptorily, though not irremediably, decided.

This collection, with only a few exceptions, particularly specified in the concluding Address, contains the whole series of those calumniated orations with which, from the famous acquittals at the Old Bailey, to the introduction of the no less notorious Convention Bill, the walls of *Beaufort Buildings* have resounded, and with the imperfect echo of which *Whitehall* and *Saint Stephen's Chapel* seem so unaccountably to have trembled. Upon the foundation of these lectures—or rather upon the *false bruit* of the doctrines



trines they were supposed to contain, you have adopted and justified a measure, from which, if you had been more faithfully informed, I trust you would have recoiled with just abhorrence. Deluded by base misrepresentations—misguided by an artfully excited alarm, which the tools and minions of a court will always have an interest in keeping alive, you have hung a most important part of the liberties and privileges of our common country, upon the slight web of these discourses, and then in anger (permit me to say,) not in judgment, have cut the thread, without examining its texture. I owe it therefore to you—I owe it to myself—I owe it to my country, to call your attention to a more faithful Report of these doctrines than you can have received from that class of beings, on whom, as it stands recorded, “Gentlemen high in Office” are in the habit of bestowing their “*confidence*.”

Had even those parts of this Report, which were then before the public, been consulted, I am confident that much of the language reiterated in the two Houses of Parliament could never have been heard: sure I am, that if the whole be now fairly and impartially canvassed, it must—it will be acknowledged, that to me great injustice has been done, and, through my sides, still greater to the public. May not I, then—may not that public expect with confidence, that you will attend to this call?—that you will now, at least, peruse with attention, what you before so unadvisedly prejudged, and atone to your country, for the error to which, as human beings, you were naturally liable, not by the tardy repentance of the next session, but by bringing the subject under immediate reconsideration, “by an address to his Majesty, or some other “means,” by which (as we have been recently informed by the Minister, perhaps with a bird’s eye glance to this subject,) “the difficulty with respect to repealing any Act “of Parliament, during the same Session in which it passed, “might be got over.” *Deb. on Loan, Tu. 19.*

My Lords! my Lords! and you, ye *chosen* guardians of the people’s rights! let me conjure you seriously to reflect—Are the doctrines contained in these volumes such as to justify the very extraordinary measures by which the constitutional liberties of Britons have been so recently restricted?—Are all attempts to reform the evident and palpable corruptions of government, and to ameliorate the  
condi-



condition of the great mass of the people, groaning as they are in want and wretchedness, to be regarded as sedition?—And, *if so*, is not

### SEDITION THE FIRST OF VIRTUES?

Nay, let me conjure you to reflect still further.—Even if these lectures were of that criminal complexion which, as I cannot suspect you of devising, I must suppose the “Reporters for Government” have represented, is it wisdom—is it justice, to punish the whole country for my transgressions?—Have the laws of Britain been violated by my weak breath? and do those laws want power to punish the unconnected individual by whom they have been thus insulted?—If so, how vain and impotent must it be to swell the enervate bulk! Do these lectures strike at the existence of all order and civilized society? and are there no provisions in the whole of those endless folios, the “Statutes at Large,” to make the daring depredator personally responsible for his personal conduct? What satire so severe could be published against our boasted Constitution?—O most unhappy land! O thrice miserable generation, in which the crimes of the individual cannot be restricted, but by the infliction of lasting punishment upon a whole people!

Legislators of Britain, I do not sue for persecution. I have had enough to satisfy any moderate appetite: enough for every good purpose to myself and others: and if the babbling of a name delight me, I may rest assured that I shall not be quite forgotten so long as remembrance shall dwell upon the inquisitorial fury of the present Administration. Rather—much rather, if the circumstances of society permitted, would I sit down in obscure retirement, to the simple enjoyments of my own domestic board, seasoned, occasionally, with the attic salt of literary society, than revel at the dear-bought, high-seasoned, turbulent, and oft-embittered banquet of political popularity. But far—far be it from me to shelter myself in impunity by the wrongs and sufferings of my country. It has ever been my system, because it has ever appeared the duty of that situation in which circumstances have placed me, to claim the responsibility of every part of my own conduct. With this claim, lo, in the present instance, I come before you, and before my country. I believe the lectures  
here

here presented to be something more than innocent. I firmly believe them to be virtuous. I know them to be the effusions of a mind conscious of the purity of its intentions, and anxious for the welfare and happiness of mankind—for the propagation of truth, the promotion of virtue, the establishment of social order, and the triumph of universal peace and benevolence. If, in these pursuits, I have missed my way—if these lectures are the things they have been described, mine only is the fault—mine only ought to be the responsibility. It is therefore that I dedicate to you these volumes—It is therefore that I endeavor to call upon you with a voice that all the land may hear—"If I am guilty, let me alone be punished! Take from my country the unconstitutional shackles with which you have restricted her hitherto undisputed liberties, and let the vial of your vengeance be poured, alone, on this devoted head." I have read, indeed, in a book which persons in your high station must be supposed to hold in transcendent reverence, of whole nations that have been punished for the crimes of kings, and we have been taught, by a prayer, which every good Episcopalian must admit to be orthodox, that kings are sometimes punished for the sins of their people; but I am totally at a loss where to look for that system, either of morality or religion, which punishes a whole people for the crimes of a simple individual. Let it not—Oh let it not be said hereafter, that this system is to be found in the code of British Jurisprudence.

I remain,

Most Noble Lords, and

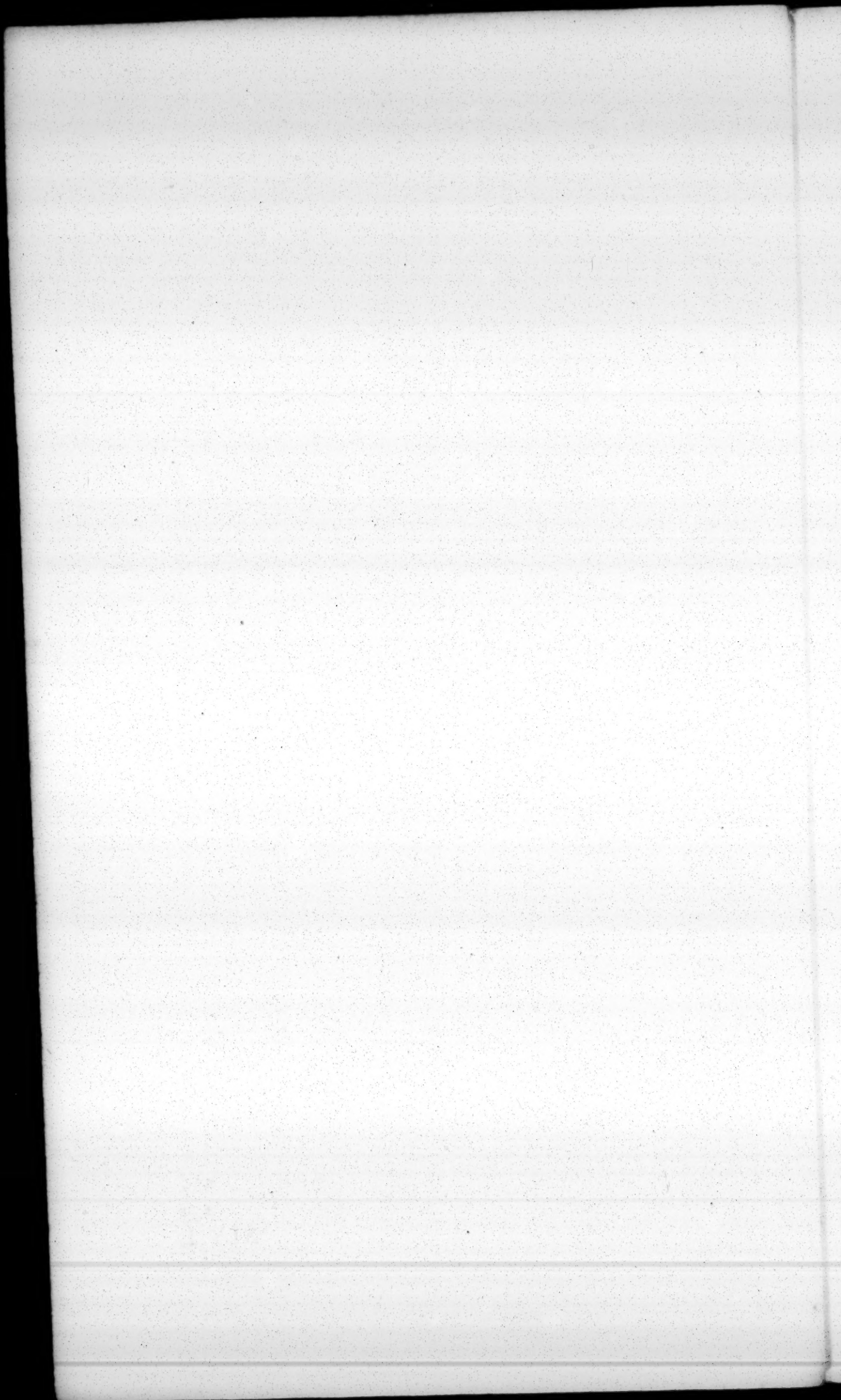
Honorable and Right Honorable Gentlemen,

(with all the respect due to your legislative conduct)

Your's, to accuse, or to exonerate,

JOHN THELWALL.

Beaufort Buildings,  
26th April 1796.





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# THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XXXIII.

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VOLUME THE THIRD.

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The Connection between the CALAMITIES of the PRESENT REIGN, and the System of BOROUGH-MONGERING CORRUPTION —LECTURE THE FIRST—--including a *Sketch of the important Services, and trifling Rewards of Messrs. PITT, DUNDAS, and CO ; with hints on the SCIENCE of APOSTACY.* Delivered Wednesday Oct. 7, 1795.

CITIZENS;

I SHALL stand in need this evening of a very considerable portion of your indulgence and forbearance: and it is necessary for me to request of you that degree of silent attention which is not in general requisite. It is rather unfortunate that when my subject calls upon me for the greatest exertion I should be the least capable of that exertion. The plan of my lectures which I have laid down will make them almost every night (if health and spirits permit) more and more interesting: because I shall be getting more and more into those important facts which will, I make no doubt, convince even the most inveterate aristocrat of the necessity of radical reform. But though this be the case with respect to the necessities of exertion, and though, having such characters to treat as Messrs. Pitt, Dundas, and Co. I wish to do all possible justice to that respectable firm, yet it is not in the power of any individual to command the accidents of nature. Health cannot be bought by popular applause, and the exertions I am so incessantly making are not the most friendly to

No. XXXIII. A the



the preservation of that health. The plain truth is, that my exertions in this place have occasionally subjected me to very severe inconveniencies; and that I labour, at this time, under very considerable misfortune in that way; and should certainly if prudence had alone been consulted, not have attempted to address you upon the present evening.

But I know the situation in which I stand. I have sold myself to the public. I am no longer my own property; and I am obliged to make exertions inconsistent with my health, that I may not give malignant calumny an opportunity to lift its voice, and propagate again those base suspicions, which artful and designing men began to disseminate, the instant my back was turned, when my health rendered some repose necessary.

I come before you this evening, therefore, rather to apologize for not lecturing, than to deliver a lecture.

I feel, and indeed my medical friends have told me as much, that any considerable exertion in my present state of health, might be fatal to my very existence. I shall therefore of course appear to very great disadvantage; because if I were to give full scope to my animal spirits, I might prevent myself from shortly, at least, being able to appear before you.

Having made these observations, I shall proceed, in a brief manner, in the first instance, to re-survey, that part of the ground over which we have already passed. You will remember, then, Citizens, that in my former lectures I have taken particular notice of the burdens, which have occasioned the distresses of the industrious orders of the community; and the very low depression of the middling orders of society. You will remember what I have proved in the course of the preceding lectures.—I make use of the bold word *proved*, because what I have stated I have substantiated upon facts drawn from aristocratic authorities, from the authority of men by no means friendly to the cause of radical parliamentary reform, though, at the same time, they are obliged to state the facts which prove that reform necessary.

I have *proved*, then, in the first instance, that during 35 years of the present reign, the poors' rates have increased considerably more than they did during 200 years of any former

former period of British history. I have proved to you, also, that the burdens, more generally called national, have proceeded in an equal ratio: that from the end of Charles the Second's reign, to the end of the reign of George the Second (a period of 85 years) the annual taxes only increased from two millions to seven; but that from the end of George the Second to the 35th of George the Third (a period of 35 years only) they have increased from 7 millions to upwards of 20 millions annually: that is to say, notwithstanding the boasts of the flourishing state of our commerce, notwithstanding the boasts that are made by placemen and pensioners of our great prosperity and great success (and certainly no period was ever so prosperous or successful to them!)—notwithstanding these boasts, we (that is to say, *the people*, who ultimately pay these taxes) are absolutely going to ruin, beggary, and bankruptcy, eight times faster than we ever went forward to the same misery before.

But, Citizens, let us consider the present fury of our political *Jehu*, and what is even this political gallop of eight to one? You will find that instead of galloping at the rate of eight to one, the prospect before us is that we shall fly at the rate of 16 to one for the future, as the evil extends, its fan-like figure, and inclines more towards the horizontal line; and our burdens are now accumulating to so inordinate a degree, that we cannot be far removed from that period when the whole of the *real revenue* of the country—that is to say, the whole earnings of productive labour, must be swallowed up by the immoderate taxes levied upon the people, to support a parcel of prostituted wretches, who call themselves *great ministers*, but who, in fact, possess no other talent of greatness than that which sends others, in lower situations, to the gallows, that of plundering mankind with the greatest adroitness.

It appears also from the facts I have stated, what was the progress of ~~the~~ national debt from the Revolution to the death of George II.—a period of 72 years. (You will remember, that before the Revolution we had no national debt: our ancestors before that time were honest enough to pay their own debts: we are now scoundrels enough to mortgage the happiness, the liberties, and the lives of posterity, to all eternity, to pay the debts contracted by our extravagance!) From



the Revolution then to the death of Geo. II. (a period of 72 years) you will find that the national debt had only arisen to 81,600,000*l.* the fact being, that (as no degree of profligacy ever gets to the highest extent in the first instance) though they began the funding system—the trade of loans—that is to say, the practice of committing robberies upon posterity, immediately after the Revolution—Yet, in the first instance, they paid a considerable part of the national burden, by assessments levied at that time, and only *borrowed* a part of the sums necessary for the expences of their wars and corruption.

In Queen *Anne's* reign they borrowed a larger part, and after that a still larger;—and so they went on, from time to time—from administration to administration, till, at last, Ministers found it more convenient to *borrow* the whole, as they call it—for you know there are certain cant phrases which prevail among persons of certain descriptions; and rogues of every denomination have their peculiar language. And indeed, at this time, almost every pick-pocket, footpad, and highway robber has too much *refinement* to call his trade by the name of stealing; and they, also, as I understand, make use of the cant phrases—*borrowing*, raising contributions, and the like!

Thus then our ancestors paid a part of their debts by their own proper means; and only borrowed the remainder; but as they went on they found it more convenient to *borrow* the whole, than to pay any part of it themselves. They thought it sufficient if they could pay the interest; and even that will by and by, perhaps, be thought superfluous; for we have found Ministers already who have begun the more convenient method of borrowing one year to pay the interest of the preceding. Thus then, Citizens, it is not surprising, that in the last thirty-five years, that is to say, in less than half the time in which the debt had grown to eighty-eight millions and an half, an addition has been made of 210 or 212 millions more.

Good God! 210 or 212 millions, all accumulated during thirty-five years, by the precious administrations which have succeeded one another in one reign!!!

Thus, Citizens, have we altogether accumulated a debt of upwards of 300 millions: for which, and for the interest of which, that is to say eleven millions per year (independent of taxes for defraying the other expences of Government, and  
sup-



supporting the profligacy and waste of placemen and pensioners) we have mortgaged the lives, the labour, and the liberties of our children, and our children's children to all eternity.

Citizens, we have heard moralists declaim with great severity against the practices of barbarous nations, who are said to expose their children to be devoured by wild beasts, or to sell them into slavery. But I would like to know, whether the Africans, who have been thought a set of wretches, who ought to be kept in chains, and made slaves from generation to generation, in our West-India Islands, because some of them are so lost in brutal ignorance, as to sell their children and relatives, or any other set of barbarians, about whom we have related (perhaps invented) so many monstrous tales, do in reality surpass this funding system? Do we not by this profligated practice, in reality, sell our children, our grandchildren, and all their progeny (as far as our power can extend) to the end of time? Do we not, I say, thus sell them to misery, and to absolute slavery? For what is it but misery and absolute slavery, when men are doomed to work from 12 to 14 hours a day for six days, at least, out of seven throughout the year, and after all, to be able to get bread and water only for themselves and families, and not enough of that? Yet this is the case with the whole of the country labourers, in particular; and to a considerable degree even with the inhabitants of great towns. For I have proved, from authentic facts, that the former are not now enabled, by the wages of their industry, to get as much bread alone as would suffice the man, his wife, and one child.

If this is not slavery—miserable slavery! I must seek a new dictionary: for I know nothing so miserable as toiling to all eternity without getting a comfortable subsistence—nothing so slavish as to drudge all one's life, that others may reap the whole benefit of that drudgery. Such is the brief recapitulation of the facts already stated. The question that results from these facts, is, What is the cause of this misery and slavery? Inordinate taxation. What then is the cause of this inordinate taxation? What is the reason that, year after year, the growth of this taxation becomes more gross and abominable? To this I answer the cause is to be traced to the usurpation of borough-mongers, and the consequent system of corruption, which though introduced almost immediately after the Revolution, was first methodized by Sir Robert

*bert Walpole*, has been considerably improved by every administration that has existed during the present reign, and was brought to perfection by those honourable men—*right honourable*, indeed, they are—Messrs. *Pitt, Dundas*, and Co.

Citizens, I know very well that it is the duty of a man, standing before the public, not only to make assertions, but to give proofs of these assertions. In support then of this assertion, I proposed to you, on a former evening, first, to prove the proportionate growth of corruption, and to shew you that it had kept pace and gone hand in hand with the growth of taxation; and in the second place, to shew you the necessary and actual connection that subsists between this corruption and this inordinate taxation. Both of these I touched slightly upon in my last lecture. But it is necessary to treat them more amply, and it was my intention to have treated them this evening. That ample kind of treatment, however, which I intended, I shall not now be able to afford them. I shall observe to you, however, that on the last evening particularly the growing and open profligacy with which this corruption was carried on was sufficiently explained.

The next thing to be considered is, the extent to which it has spread. Upon this point a great number of facts might be stated to you: and that I might be able to state them to you, I have been at considerable pains to procure a pamphlet, published in the year 1780, intitled, “*Facts*,” (without any name, but which was, in reality, the joint production of Lord *Shelburne*, the late Dr. *Price*, and *John Horne Tooke*)—a pamphlet which, from the history it contains of the extent and progress of this corruption, is particularly worthy of your attention; and about which I shall relate a little anecdote, as it will shew how unwilling even the most flaming pretenders to patriotism sometimes are that this corruption should be fully unmasked to the people. At the time when this pamphlet was written, Lord *Shelburne* had, it seems, a very great desire of becoming Prime Minister of the country: but he perceived, at that time no means of attaining this post of honour but by the most flaming hostility to the existing corruption of government. Under this impression, this book was compiled; but, while it was in the press, a prospect seemed to open itself of the probability of Royal favour; and he accordingly sent for *Horne Tooke*, and told him that he would be much obliged to him if he would suppress the publication; for, upon further reflection,  
he



he did not think it proper that such facts should be publicly stated. To which, *Horne Tooke*, who is not to be easily hood-winked, immediately replied, "Since the hour that these facts were collected and put together, I have never had a moment's doubt of the propriety of publishing them; and as therefore I have collected them together, and put them into this form, you must excuse me if I declare that the pamphlet shall be published with all possible expedition."

From that day, I understand that *Horne Tooke* and the Lord *Lansdown* never had any sort of intercourse. So much, then, for your flaming patriots, who, while they think they have no way of getting into power, but by riding upon your shoulders, profess to be your humble servants; but the moment a dawn of hope opens to them of the better things to be expected from royal favour, they perceive how seditious and treasonable a thing it is to publish facts, and expose the corruption from which they in their turn, are likely to reap the profits and advantages. Just so the *foi-disant* friends of the people:—I wish I could speak of them in better terms: for there are men among them whose individual qualities, every man who has a heart must reverence. But it is the curse of faction, that the better a man is in his real character and private feelings, the more fatal instrument he becomes of public ruin and oppression, the instant he enters into such league.

Faction, despicable faction! must for ever destroy the virtues of the human heart: for the very bond of faction is the sacrifice of individual judgment to the will of the party to which they are linked: but it is only by adhering with upright dignity to the convictions of our own understandings, and pursuing the straight line chalked out by that conviction, that we can possibly expect to attain to any degree of virtue. Your friends of the people then, at the moment when, flushed by the victory of the late trials (for undoubtedly a victory it was to them as well as to us and to the nation) when they expected (and some of them I know expressed their expectations in no very ambiguous terms) "That the time was not very distant when his Majesty would be obliged to take Mr. Fox and his party into power whether he would or not:" they came to a resolution to adjourn all considerations upon the subject of *Parliamentary Reform*.

This will shew you, that during the reign of corruption,  
there



there is little to expect from party combinations; and that every thing must be fought for by your own exertions; by the independence of your own minds; by the courage with which you enquire and state your opinions, when you have enquired; and by the manly determination to be ultimately satisfied with nothing less than the complete restoration of your rights. Shifting the power from hand to hand is doing much for the persons into whose hands the power falls; but nothing for the nation. If we may be permitted to borrow an illustration from "*Æsop's Fables*," it is only driving off the swarm of flies, already partly satiated, to render yourselves a prey to a fresh swarm, more hungry, and consequently more devouring than the former.

With respect to the particular "*Facts*," which from this work I meant to have stated to you, as I had some difficulty in procuring it, and could not get it till this day, and as there are a variety of circumstances, which, before I state to you, I wish to trace, not only to the year 1780, but from 80 to 95, I must adjourn the consideration of these important circumstances till my next lecture.

But, Citizens, permit me just to observe to you, in the meanwhile, that there is not any great necessity, for the satisfaction of a few obstinate minds, to trace these facts very particularly; because generally known circumstances will satisfy us of the enormous growth of this corruption. Let us consider what is the present state of the country with respect to power, place, and patronage.

Let us recollect, that notwithstanding placemen are now increasing an hundred fold, that they swarm year after year, like bees, or rather indeed like wasps and hornets that annoy those industrious bees, and devour their honey—but though the number of these dependents upon court influence—that is, the number of persons to be maintained out of the public purse is thus increasing, let us recollect the monstrous accumulation of places, in defiance of this circumstance, so frequently grasped by single individuals, or single families. Let us recollect the *Beresfords* in *Ireland*, the *Dundas's* in *England* and in *Scotland* (for *England*, *Scotland* and *India* must submit to the powerful genius of this man, who grasps in his great imagination all the corners of the world) and would no  
doubt

doubt prove to you that it is for the welfare and happiness of mankind that he should enjoy the patronage of the Antipoles, the Poles, the Equator, and the Temperate Zones. Let us recollect, also, the *Pitts*, the *Chathams*, and the *Grenvilles*, and the monstrous train of places, pensions, and dependencies, which hang upon this family alone.

Citizens, it was observed by *Davenant*—who wrote at the time of King *William* and Queen *Anne*, and who marked in a very strong manner the growth corruption was making, even in those times, and, with excellent sense and strong perception, has marked what must be the catastrophe of that corruption, delineating, by prophecy, that exact state of degradation to which this country is at this time reduced—It was observed by *Davenant*, that since the introduction of corruption, a considerable change had taken place relative to the filling of places. Formerly, says he, the difficulty was to find men enough fit for the offices that were to be filled; but now the case is altered, and the principal difficulty seems to be to find places enough for the men who are thought fit to be put into them. But by the great improvements that have taken place in the science of politics, both these difficulties are now effectually done away. It is found that almost any man is fit for any office he can be put into; and that there are not only plenty of offices for every man who wishes for one, but enough also, to give them away by dozens and scores, to every individual who can prove that he has sufficient pliancy of principle to deserve them; and brass enough in his countenance to vindicate the peculations belonging to them.

With respect to the *Beresfords*, I shall not be very particular in my enumeration; for I am not very well acquainted with the affairs of *Ireland*: but it has pleased the Earl *Fitzwilliam*, in his great wisdom and virtue, to take care that we shall not be totally in ignorance, on this side of the water, of the manner in which business is transacted there: he has particularly delineated the power, influence, and patronage of this *Beresford* family; which (forgetting the *Pitts* and *Dundas's* on this side the channel) he has the boldness to say, grasps more places, pensions, patronage, and emoluments, than ever were accumulated in one family before.

No. XXXIII.

B

But



But what is the situation of that great statesman *Henry Dundas*. I think I shall by and by prove to you what a very great statesman he is. You know I have only promised, in my advertisements, to give you an imperfect history; and certainly an imperfect one it will be. If I were to enumerate all the places of this political *elephant*—for nothing but an elephant could bear upon his shoulders such a weight—It would break the back of either ass or horse!—If I were to enumerate all the places and patronage he upholds, the night would pass away, the morning would break upon us, and the night would close again, before we should have finished them all, and the &c's. &c's. &c's. which attach themselves to this once great luminary of the Scotch Bar, and now great oracle of the British Senate. I will just mention to you, however, some few of them; such as *Secretary of State*, *President of the Board of Controul*, *Treasurer of the Navy*, *Lord of Trade*, *Keeper of the Signet in Scotland*, *Patron of all Scotland*, *Patron of all India*, and holder of the leading strings to his Grace the *Duke of Portland*!

With respect to Pitt, I shall have an opportunity of being a little more, and only a little more, ample; having more facts relative to him; tho' very far indeed from that collection necessary to display all the grandeur of that sublime and august personage: a personage whom one of his express advocates calls, by obvious implication, *King of Britain*! for he says, he consented to bring forward (tho' against his own judgment) the motion for paying the Prince's debts, "rather than expose the country, in these perilous times, to the danger of another *inter-regnum*." So that, according to this—please to remember, tho' the effigy of Geo. III. is impressed upon your coin—tho' the name of Geo. III. is printed at the top of your statutes, yet it is not King *George III*—but King *William IV*. that reigns in *England* at this day.

Citizens, in a little publication, called the *Patriot*, which, I believe, never had so wide a circulation as it deserved, I find a list of some of the places which this man holds; and I happened, from turning over a little *Pocket Atlas*, to find two more, which they did not seem to know of, and which I have added to the list. However the list is still very imperfect. Here then follows an imperfect history of "the disinterested family;" or, in other words, a list of some of the places, pensions, and emoluments, held by Mr. Pitt and his immediate relatives and connections. First of all, you know, Mr. Pitt is *First Lord of the Treasury*, with an avowed salary,  
per



per annum, for that place, of 4,000l. As for the &c. &c. &c's. the little articles, which he knows very well, I dare say, if he understands his business—and it is a pity he should have been at the trade so long and not understand it—as for these &c's. with which he knows so well how to augment this 4,000l. it is impossible for me to detail them in this place. He holds also the place of *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, with a little compliment of 2,000l. a year more. Then follow two, which are omitted in this list, *Lord of Trade* (and the merchants and under-writers will say he has taken a most lordly care of the trade of this country, no doubt!) and *Commissioner of the trade of India*. I do not know the exact value of these places; but I suppose no one would think of insulting a *Chancellor of the Exchequer* and *First Lord of the Treasury* with any thing of less value than 1000l. a year. I have therefore set these down at 1000l. each. These are places held during pleasure; but to these are to be added Warden of the Cinque Ports, 4,000l. per annum for life.

Then come the places that are, and have been, held by his relations. “Cousin of *Buckingham*,” three years *Lord Lieutenant of Ireland*, upon a salary of 20,000l. a year.—Cousin *Grenville*, Secretary of State, with a salary of 10,000l. a year.—Brother of *Chatham* was *First Lord of the Admiralty*, for several years, with a salary of 5,000l. a year. He has now swabbed (not the decks, for he knew nothing about them, but) places with apostate Spencer, and is content to receive the nation's money under a different pretence. Cousin *Pitt*, the General commander in chief in Ireland, 3 000l. per annum.—Brother in law *Townsend*, *Lord of the Admiralty*, 1000l. per year. These are places during pleasure. Now follow a list of places for life. Cousin *Grenville*, *Remembrancer of the Exchequer in Ireland*, 3,000l. per ann.—Ditto *Keeper of the Parks*, 3000l. per annum; and surely you cannot think this too much for taking care that the grass is well mowed, and the walks well swept.—Brother in law *Elliott*, *Remembrancer of the Exchequer of England*, 3,000l. per annum.—Father in law, *Sydney*, *Chief Justice in Eyre*, 3,000l. per annum,” I do not pledge myself that all these temporary places continue in this family. I am not sure that some of them have not been removed changed and for other places, perhaps more convenient. But it is a matter of no consequence what chopping and changing there may have been.—This shews you the inordinate and grasping ambition of the clan; and may explain to you the causes why taxes are so heavy, and why we cannot afford to pay the labourer

wages proportionate to the price of provisions. The accumulation of offices and salaries in his own person, you see, is not enough for a Minister now. Every stick of wood upon which a hat can be hung, if it claims relationship to him, has a title to the first offices and emoluments in the State. You can, therefore, have no doubt of the disinterested sincerity of his patriotism. He would not deign to bring a Bill into Parliament, for the payment of debts, contrary to his own conviction and judgment, if it were not from the pure disinterested desire of administering his services to a country he loves so dearly, and whose health he is so continually drinking with Brother *Dundas*, upon *Wimbledon Common*. He would not preserve these offices by such compliance, if it were not absolutely necessary, as the only way "to avoid exposing his country, at such a conjuncture, to the danger of another interregnum."

Now for the titles: things which were once supposed to confer some dignity, but which can now be lavished upon any cousin or relative of a Minister, or upon any person capable of doing the dirty work of that Minister. Cousin *Temple*, Marquis of *Buckingham*; Cousin *Grenville*, Lord *Grenville*; Father in Law *Townsend*, Viscount and Baron *Sydney*; Father in Law *Elliot*, Lord *Elliot*; Uncle *Pitt*; Lord *Camelford*; Brother *Chatham*, Knight of the Garter; Cousin *Buckingham*, ditto; *Pitt*, the General, Knight of the *Bath*; Lord *Fortescue*, who married one of the Cousin *Grenvilles*, a Viscount and an Earl; Lord *Carysfort*, who married another Cousin *Grenville*, an Earl; Mr. *Neville*, who married another Cousin *Grenville*, the Barony of *Braybrooke* in reversion. Such then, Citizens, are the trifling rewards, or a part of the trifling rewards, conferred upon these worthy families. Now let us, if you please, examine what are their titles to these rewards; and, having so examined, I shall apologize for not continuing any longer those exertions which I assure you I find so painful to myself. I shall observe, however, by the way, such is the height to which corruption has grown, that, notwithstanding all the patronage thus attached to office, notwithstanding the numerous places a man can thus grasp, a Minister is not content, but must make a bargain with his Prince, before he accepts these offices, upon the terms of his dismissal. The bargain Mr. *Pitt* made was, that resign when he would, he should have 5,000*l.* per year settled upon him, for his services, for life.

Now,



Now, Citizens, what have the services of these families been? As for the services of the *Beresford* family, we know what they are. All former services are, however, eclipsed in the glory of the last: namely, prolonging the reign of intolerance and factious distinctions for speculative opinions in matters of religion: preventing the Catholic emancipation from taking place: the blessed fruits of which are, that *Ireland* is at this time, from one end to the other, in a state of commotion; and that perhaps this country may be threatened with another *American war*, and another amputation of this boasted empire.

As for *Dundas*, nobody can doubt that his services are great and important as his rewards, if they do but remember the indefatigable zeal with which, year after year, administration after administration, no matter who was in or who was out, he was ready to undertake whatever business was put upon him; proving thus, at once, the profundity and the versatility of his talents and principles. Thus we find him in *North's* administration, a supporter of the *American war*—In *Rockingham's* administration a friend to peace. In *Shelburne's* administration turning to the *Shelburne* principles—if we can find out which these are. We find him, in short, never out of place, except for a very few weeks, from *North's* Administration to the present day. The time that he was out was during the coalition Administration; who thought they had disgrace enough to bear upon their own shoulders, without saddling themselves also with the disgrace of employing a “Wha wants me.” We find him, however, coming in again under the administration of *Pitt*, the boasted reformer.

Surely we must admit, the superior genius of that man whose talents are so versatile, that he could fit himself to the views and humours of so many administrations—a man whose power and talents are so great that each administration joyed, in regular succession, to drink their claret and Tokay with him at *Wimbledon*, and digest the fate of Europe with their dinners at his table, must have a mind as capacious as the rewards that have been heaped upon him. These are proofs of his talents: the services he has performed are written in our tax tables, in so legible a character, that the boy who never saw a horn-book can nevertheless read them.

But let us consider what are the particular services of *Pitt*, and we shall then find that all other services shrink before them, as the stars fade away when the sun makes its appearance



ance in the morning. The first of the great services performed by this man was sneaking in the dark, up the *back stairs*, to save his Majesty from the disagreeable necessity of opposing his royal veto against a bill, then in danger of passing through both Houses. The next service was also an act of grace to Leadenhall-street; when through a tender and loving affection towards the great *East-India* Nabobs, he shut up all our windows and kept us in perpetual darkness, that we might, for a few months buy our tea a little cheaper than we did before: this being perhaps the only thing he was ever likely to have the power of doing to please the ladies. But alas, the poor dear things were sadly let down: the immaculate boy disappointed ALL their expectations; and by and by the only persons who reap any advantage from this dismal commutation were found to be the East-India Company, who being, through him, secured in their monopoly, are able to demand what price they choose. The consequence is known to be, that you must pay from six to eight shillings a pound for the same tea that you would buy for 20d. but for this monopolizing corporation.

Another of the services which Britain must remember for ever with gratitude is, *the extension of the EXCISE LAWS*; those beneficial restrictions upon the too insolent liberties of men who, while they can consider their houses as their castles, will always be inclined to consider themselves as somebodies, and to doubt whether ministers are really God-almighties.—O! there is nothing like breaking their spirit a little. A young colt before you mount him, must be tied by the hour to a whipping-post, in order to be broken in, as it is called; and if a *nation is to be ridden*, with any comfort to the rider, it must be tied and broken in also. Thus then it is undoubtedly right, that the exciseman, or somebody else, should have the prerogative of breaking into as many houses, at all hours of the day and night, and keep the keys of as many peoples' workshops and closets, to prevent their having the use of their own utensils, as possible. These excise laws have also another very excellent tendency; that is to say, they tend in a particular manner to the total ruin and destruction of the little trader, and thereby promote a sort of monopoly in favour of those rich traders, whose returns are so extensive, that they can afford to bribe the higher officers of this excise; and then by having the exclusive opportunity of cheating and defrauding the revenue, they can afford to sell many articles cheaper

cheaper in their shops, than a little trader can even make them.

There is another circumstance which entitles this minister undoubtedly to great praise and gratitude; namely the establishment of a wise and excellent system, by which, politically speaking, he is enabled to realize the fable of Argus, and to exercise at one time 100,000 eyes. Those eyes, it is true, are not all of them very good. They sometimes happen to see things that never were, and remain blind to things that are! They happen to sleep also, sometimes, and see visions, and then put them upon him as realities: But the eyes are as good as his *memory*; and so they do very well together. You will perceive that I allude to the system of spies, inquisitions, and informers.

Let us however do justice even to an enemy; there is one serious service which he did both to the King and the people: I mean the bold and decided manner in which he acted upon the question of the regency. It is no small wound to the reflecting mind, to think that our general plan of politics is such that the best men are frequently obliged to perform the worst part: and that the vindication of justice can sometimes rest upon the interested exertions of the basest of mankind. I own, Citizens, when I think what the men are on the one side, and on the other, I am affected with grief and indignation at this despicable system of faction warring against faction. When I consider that such men as *Fox* and *Sheridan*, and some of their coadjutors, should stand forward in support of sentiments little short of the absurd and exploded doctrine of divine right; and that the vindication of our constitutional liberty should have devolved upon such beings as *Pitt*, *Dundas* and *Thurlow*!—I own I cannot but almost be inclined to drop a tear over the departed virtues of my country when I see, from such examples, that it has no hopes of being preserved from the usurpations of faction. but by occasionally throwing itself into the arms of the most degenerate and worthless of mankind.

Yet let me do justice to the man, whatever were his motives, his conduct upon that question appears to me to have been consonant at once to the principles of the constitution, and the natural principles of liberty—and when *Burke*, the flaming hero of the dagger, was raving aloud with Jacobinical fury, that the Almighty, in his vengeance, had hurled the King from his throne, I own it was with  
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considerable satisfaction, that I perused the manly sentiments which were dictated by the opposite side of the House.

Having done this act of justice to the man, let me also do another act of justice to truth, by confessing that, whatever motives might actuate him then, he has since compensated, more than 100 and 1000 fold to the *Prince of Darkness*, for that one departure from principles which that *Prince* would wish, I suppose, to uphold. If for that once he was the saviour, he has been ever since, the scourge and plague of this devoted country.

At that time it was that he seemed to obtain a power of towering to something like sovereign dignity: and he is very much disposed, it should seem, never to let that sovereignty depart again from his hand, till he has involved the country in universal misery and ruin.

But his grand merit is that of having reduced political apostacy to a science: and most certainly this science he has carried to the utmost perfection; as every one must be convinced, who beholds the skill and effrontery, though not the success, with which he so lately endeavoured to prove his former patriotism to have been High Treason, and thereby to destroy all those who had the hardihood to persevere in the principles which he had been so forward to propagate.

Such appears to me to be a just, though slight sketch of the astonishing merits by which those exalted individuals have attained the trifling rewards of power and emolument which they at present enjoy in this happy and flourishing country.

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XXXIV.

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The Connection between the CALAMITIES of the PRESENT REIGN, and the System of BOROUGH-MONGERING CORRUPTION—LECTURE THE SECOND—including Sketches of the Connection between the Growth of Taxation and Corruption, and the increasing Miseries of the Industrious Poor; and Reflections on the Metaphysical Sophistries of WINDHAM, and the pious Ravings of BURKE. Delivered Friday October 9, 1795.

CITIZENS,

A Portion of that indulgence shewn me on the last evening it is necessary you should again extend; for though my health is considerably improved, I am very far from being in a condition to make the wished-for exertions.

I come before you to resume a subject of considerable importance, and to enter particularly into that branch of the enquiry whose importance is, perhaps, greater than any other.

All however that I shall be able to do this evening will be to enter into a statement of facts and principles, and the conclusions that result from them, in as methodical a manner as I am capable, and with as little exertion as possible; because it will be eminently imprudent for me to enter into digressions which would rouse my passions and feelings, and occasion me to speak with particular warmth and animation.



Citizens, you will remember that I have dwelt very largely upon the burdens which have accumulated upon the shoulders of the people. You will remember also, that I then laid it down as an axiom, that this increase of burden may be traced to the increase of corruption in the legislative branches of the government; and that there is not only a necessary connection in theoretical reasoning between the two, but that there is also a practical connection, demonstrable from facts that may be brought before you. Some little progress on the two preceding nights I have made with respect to the proofs of this strong assertion. I shall go on this evening with shewing some other facts which will prove the connection still further. I shall begin with shewing you that this connection is no forged invention of Jacobinical innovators; for that the aristocratical writers of the present century have themselves perceived this truth, and have stated it pretty strongly in some of their most celebrated writings. I shall particularly instance *Hume*; for I am particularly desirous of bringing before you, as often as possible, quotations from writers who take the opposite side of the question to that which I endeavour to maintain: because I wish to impress it upon you, that whatever degree of conviction you possess in your own hearts, with whatever confidence you may express that conviction, yet, if you have not examined both sides of the question, and read the aristocratic productions of the avowed champions of corruption and despotism, as well as those on the side of reform and liberty, the impression upon your minds can be nothing more than a *prejudice*, which perhaps the first violent declamation on the other side may brush away. Nothing deserves the name of *opinion* but what results from a determination to be in possession of all the facts you can accumulate, and to examine with equal candour the arguments against you and those in your support.

It was therefore, I confess, that I spent almost the whole of the last summer which indisposition and the little recreation of the country permitted me to devote to study, in reading aristocratic writers alone, and in marking, with my pen, innumerable passages which are stronger and more forcible weapons to enforce democratic principles than any thing that ever came from any of the writers who are professed and acknowledged champions for the Rights of Man.

Citizens, I shall bring you a passage I think of that description. It is well known that *Hume*, besides the very partial  
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and pleader-like history he wrote, has also produced several political works; and particularly a collection of Essays. In in one of these he has examined, in a very *ingenious*, but, at the same time, in a very *sophistical* manner, the important question, "Whether the constitution of Britain is more likely to terminate in a republic or an absolute monarchy?" *Hume*, from the manner in which he states the question not only argues the probability, but even affirms the desirability of absolute monarchy, in preference to a republic. I also shall discuss this question in the course of these lectures: and in the first place, denying that either one or the other is necessary, I shall maintain it would be better for us to have a republic than an absolute monarchy. Nay, I think I shall compel you to conclude, that, if we cannot have a reform without republicanism, it is better to have a republic than to endure all the consequences of that borough-mongering corruption which is growing so fast upon us.

This, I say, will be a question for future examination: and it will also be a fair question for examination, whether the arguments are well founded which have been asserted by *Hume*, formerly, and by *Peacock* and others of later times, with some plausibility and ingenuity, that one or other of these must be the case. At present I shall satisfy myself with a single passage from *Hume* relative to the influence and corruption which result from increasing the burdens of the people; or in other words, from augmenting the favourite system of revenue.

Having spoken of the British spirit of liberty, which is supposed, by certain persons, to prevail very strongly in our minds, "It may be said", says he, "that this spirit, however great, will never be able to support itself against that immense patronage which is now lodged in the hands of the King. Upon a moderate computation," says he, "there are now, (in 1742) near three millions, at the disposal of the Crown. The civil list amounts to near a million; the collection of all the taxes to another million; and the employments in the army and navy, along with ecclesiastical preferments, to above a third million." He then goes on to add, after making a comparison between these three millions, and the whole revenue of the country—"when we add to this immense property, the increasing luxury of the nation, our proneness to corruption, along with the great power and prerogative of the Crown, and the



“ command of such numerous military forces, *there is no one*  
 “ *but must despair of being able, WITHOUT EXTRAORDI-*  
 “ *NARY EFFORTS, to support our free government much*  
 “ *longer.*”

Now, Citizens, in the first place, let us enquire where does the danger lie? The decrees of the Cabinet are not yet laws; It is true we have had decrees relative to increasing the accommodation of soldiers, that have had no sanction from Parliament, and yet have been carried into execution; and we have had proclamations stuck upon every sign post, and every watch box, public house door and church door throughout the country, to scare ignorant rustics with rumours of soldiers and conspiracies; but nobody yet presumes to say that the proclamations of the Cabinet are laws. The making and altering of laws is vested in the Parliament. Well, then, how does *Hume* suppose that this patronage of three millions in the Crown, can affect the liberties of the people? How does he suppose that this great military force can affect the liberties of the people whose *representatives* annually vote their continuance or dismissal? It is then by buying up the Parliament, by means of this patronage, that the liberties of the people can alone be threatened: and therefore the direct and immediate conclusion is, that the growth of taxation is the growth of corruption: because the revenue, with which people are to be corrupted, is the result of taxation—ergo, *the greater your taxes the greater your corruption!!!*

Then, Citizens, let us consider that it is full 50 years since this paragraph was written: let us consider that during those 50 years, the burdens of the nation, and the consequent patronage of the Crown, have been growing to a most immense extent.

It is not my intention to enter very amply into minute particulars; if I can shew you gross amounts, upon good authorities, I shew sufficient for my conclusions.

I will, however, give you a few instances of the growth of this patronage and corruption, in one or two particular instances. For example, respecting ministers to foreign courts—here are a few curious *items*. In *William* the Third's time we find the amount of these embassies was not more than 45,000*l.* per year. In the last years of *George* the Second, which was somewhat after the time when *Hume* wrote this Essay, they had only increased 5000*l.* that is to say 50,000*l.*  
 a year

a year was the amount of the burdens laid upon the people for this article: but in 1778, they had swelled to 98,000 per year; and it is notorious, that at this time, this article of expenditure is immensely and extravagantly more. It is even asserted, with some degree of confidence, that the embassy of Lord Macartney to the Emperor of *China*, to exchange baubles, and bring back a copy of an *Imperial poem*, cost this country half a million of money.

Citizens, I have not been able to be so active during the last week as has been my general habit, and to hunt from place to place till I can get the facts I desire; and therefore I have not been able to get the present amount of the *secret service money*; but, Citizens, I can tell you that, in *George the Second's* time, this was no more than 44,000*l.* per year, that in 1777, it was no more than 86,000*l.* a year, but if we consider the present posture of affairs; and remember, that we carry on the present war, upon the system of *secret services*—if you remember the tricks and cabals continually playing in the interior of *France*—our communications with the rebels and outcasts of society in *Brittany*—if we consider the great stress that is laid upon this *secret dagger work* (if I may be permitted so to express myself)—we must suppose that the growth of expence is inordinate beyond all description.

Citizens, there is another article which I cannot trace down to the present time: The pensions avowedly upon the civil list: But you will see that *this part of the revenue* is in the same progressive state of *improvement* with the rest. In the last reign they amounted to 68,300*l.* In 1777 they had grown to 127,000*l.* and they have been growing ever since.

But let us turn to the wholesale articles insisted upon by *Hume*. He estimates the civil list at less than one million. It is notorious that, since the present King came to the throne, there have been considerable augmentations to this list; and that it is now, taking all circumstances into consideration, about 1,200,000*l.*

I know, Citizens, that this great revenue having been complained of in certain *seditionous* publications, it has been replied in the House of Commons, that this revenue is not all consumed by the King. Certainly, Citizens: we know very well that being a King neither so much enlarges the stomach of a man, nor so much extends the capaciousness of his back



back, that he should be able to eat, drink, and wear 1,200,000*l.* worth of commodities in a year. Tho' it has been said that there are Stadtholders who can eat whole legs of mutton for their dinners, yet we know that, generally speaking, Princes are only ordinary men; and that they eat and drink in the same manner and proportion with other men. But remember, that it is a much worse thing for the nation that this is not all consumed by that royal Personage, to whom it is impossible that we should grudge any thing which can contribute to his real enjoyment, than if it were. For if it is not consumed by the Sovereign, it must be consumed by other persons thereby rendered dependant upon him;—or, more properly speaking, upon his ministers. It is, therefore, more to my point to shew you that it is not consumed by him, than if I could prove it is—for the consequence is, that there is so much influence created by patronage, destructive of all independence, in the House of Commons. This patronage and the influence it creates, extending to the members of that house, and their relatives, they will be sure to vote for whatever measure is brought forward by the Court, though that measure should be to load the people with thirty millions of taxes more than they are loaded with already.

But let us consider what the increase of patronage has been with respect to the other two articles.

You will remember that *Hume* estimates the patronage, from the collection of taxes, at one million: that is to say, an emolument of one million to those officers by whom the taxes were collected. Well then, the more taxes you have to collect, the greater the expence of collecting them; the greater number of hands employed, the greater degree of patronage—or, in other words, of corruption. Mark then: in 1742, the time when *Hume* wrote this Essay, the taxes amounted to but about six millions. In 1795, at which time we still, notwithstanding our burdens, have power to breathe, our annual taxes amount to upwards of twenty millions.—Now then, to exercise you a few minutes in arithmetic—call to mind, that if the levying of six millions of taxes produce one million of patronage to the Crown, the levying of twenty millions of taxes must produce to the Crown a patronage of three millions and a half:—that is to say, the collection of six millions of taxes bringing a profit of one million to the persons by whom these taxes were collected, the collection of twenty millions of taxes must bring a profit of three million  
and

and an half, at least, to those who do collect those twenty millions of taxes. Nay, this is reckoning much too low—for as you increase taxation, you increase the difficulty of the levy. You cannot levy three or four times the taxes with three or four times the trouble with which they were before levied; because every individual having more temptation, and more necessity to attempt to evade those taxes, a greater proportion of tax-gatherers is necessary to prevent that evasion. Hence the increasing swarms of Collectors, Excisemen, Supervisors, Supervisor's Clerks, Auditors, Auditors' Clerks, and persons of all classes and descriptions in the department of Customs and Excise are increased to such a degree as would stagger credulity, if it were not that so many of us have such good reason to be very well acquainted with the fact.

Now every appointment has, and must have, its *political* price. Every vacant place is marked, like bales of stockings in a hosiery's shop, with the *minimum* of *parliamentary*, or which is the same, of *electioneering* influence it must bring. And such are the obligations of corruption in which every minister is bound, that if he sell his commodities under price he must shut up shop; he must become bankrupt, and his political opponents, like unfeeling assignees, seize upon his effects, and carry on the trade for their own advantage; while the great body of his creditors (I mean the public) suck their fingers for a dividend, and continue to be cheated as before.

Let us now turn to the patronage resulting from the increased expences in the army and navy. Is this to be considered as much less than the former? I believe we shall find it quite the contrary. When we find that the supplies voted for the army this year are 11,241,000l.—when we recollect that those for the navy are 6,315,000, we must remember that this *army* must have officers, must have contractors, must have attendants and dependants of various descriptions; that this *navy*, also, must have its officers, contractors, &c. &c. and that these officers and these contractors are so many dependants upon the administration in possession of the reins of power. If, then, upwards of one million was fifty years ago charged by *Hume*, who was always favourable enough to the Court party, to the account of influence arising from the distribution of offices, &c. in the navy and army, we shall be obliged to acknowledge an immense weight of this patronage in the present instance. I will give you one instance, to shew you what this increase must be. In 1755, which was a little after *Hume* wrote, we find that the extraordinaries of the  
army



army were only 504,977l. in 1778 the extraordinaries of the army were 3,026,137l. and that, in 1795, the extraordinaries of the army were 3,600,000l. Such has been the increase in this individual article. If the increase of expence in other articles has borne any proportion with this, patronage must have increased at the rate of at least seven to one. However, that we may not be over extravagant in our estimate, let us conclude that if the patronage in 1742 was three millions, we must now admit, considering the monstrous growth of taxation, considering the extent to which our military establishment, in particular, and our naval also, are extended; we must now suppose, that there is, at least, a patronage of between nine and ten million, per year, vested in the Crown.

With respect to the *Church*, I believe that stands pretty much as it did. It does not, therefore, require any particular animadversions.

Citizens, a question immediately results from this statement. How is this patronage connected with the system of borough-mongering corruption? I have stated to you, already, that the great evil is to be attributed to this circumstance—that, by the great patronage of the Crown, Ministers, who hold the reins of patronage in their hands, are enabled to buy up the votes of those who *ought to be* the representatives of the people. It may therefore be perhaps suggested, if it is by the representatives being bought up that you are reduced to the calamities under which you at present groan, how are you to be assured that parliamentary reform and the annihilation of borough-mongering interest would relieve you from these excessive burdens? For it may be said, it is as easy to buy up a man who is sent into parliament by one set of people as by another; and that he who has been returned to parliament by 10,000 or 20,000 votes may be purchased at the same price as that man who is sent by one or two voters, or perhaps by no voters at all.

If this statement contained no fallacy, I grant it would be vain to reason about reform: it would be more wise to look about for ourselves what comforts might yet be enjoyed, and to trouble ourselves no farther about the miseries of our fellow-beings. But I flatter myself that I shall prove, that nothing but the system of borough-mongering corruption could enable any set of men to buy up the representatives in parliament, be their patronage what it would: yea, though the revenues of the country were increased a hundred fold; for  
mark—

mark—If every man who has a seat in parliament were annually chosen by the unbiassed suffrages—by the uninfluenced ballot, for I know no other way by which votes can be given, without influence—of the great mass of the people—If he were to return every year, with his responsibility upon his head, to the bar of that public who, if they are displeased with his conduct, would reject him from that seat he formerly held; then mark the consequence—every year the minister would have to buy his majority afresh, or else what had been done one year towards the establishment of despotism, would be undone the next by the purity of a renovated representation.

Now what revenue could possibly enable any administration annually to repeat this corruption? The mines of *Mexico* and *Peru*, even if they could be worked without expence, would not be sufficient. Men who stand forward in any degree of respectability are not to be bought for trifles. However base and degenerate the individual who may have been unworthily honoured by the confidence of the people, he will remember that public estimation is of some value, and it is not a paltry bauble, that will induce him to renounce his fair fame. Our business then is not to trouble our heads whether men are, or are not pure, but to consider how we are so to frame our system that even the vices of mankind shall have no longer the power to hurt us.

This, I think, Citizens, is only to be done by annual parliaments, and universal suffrage. I might, if this were the proper time, quote a long string of arguments from the most unsuspected authorities, in support of this opinion; from *Whig* writers, and *Tory* writers; supporters of the House of *Stuart*, and supporters of the House of *Brunswick*. In short I know no writer of strong mind, not even *Burke*, but has advanced facts and arguments upon which this opinion might be supported: but suffice it at present slightly to observe, what the influence would be relative to the system of corruption and consequent taxation.

I have shewn you insuperable difficulties attendant upon corrupting the *real* representatives of a people. I shall now show you how very easy, under the present system this corruption must be. Remember, Citizens, they have not now to buy men every year—no—nor even to purchase them once in every seven years. It has indeed been regarded by some as a sort of seven years purchase; and therefore they have



supposed that the simple circumstance of shortening the duration of parliaments would remedy the grievance, by rendering the purchase too frequent to be supported. But, Citizens, be not deluded by half-way measures; he who recommends a mid-way path, between right and wrong, means to make you the instruments of his own ambitious views. Think what your rights are, and determinately persevere, with tranquil and benevolent firmness to the attainment of full and complete justice, for you will find half-way expedients always defective. Even annual parliaments, so long as the borough-mongering system continues would be no relief. For how is it that corruption plays its game at this time? by purchasing individual votes? No, they are put up by wholesale in large lots, and knocked down to the best bidders. The very succession is bought; and the *votes*, though not the *seats*, are rendered in effect hereditary: I say hereditary; for whenever faction so possesses the purse of the nation, as to be enabled to purchase the boroughs by which the seats in the House of Commons are filled, they are as completely and effectively hereditary, as to the principle, as the seats in the House of Lords. Nay, they are worse than hereditary, for they are transferable property which every one can buy and sell, which is not the case with peerages and titles.

But borough-mongering corruption is a mere system of disgraceful barter; and he who is ashamed to hold this *property*, as it called, any longer, would not be ashamed to sell it to one who has more effrontery than himself. There are two ways then by which this corruption is effected, either by buying up the proprietors of rotten boroughs, and thus securing, so long as the party so bought, or his successors, continue in possession of these boroughs, two, four, six or eight representatives in parliament, and their heirs and successors in the representation for ever! Another way is, to let some clerk of the treasury, some pander of political profligacy, collect so much property as enables him to buy half-a-dozen boroughs; and then you have the members who *represent* them, entirely at your devotion. Both these modes of corruption are practised, which is notorious to every one who hears me.

If you doubt, whether borough-mongers are bought, look to the list of new-created peerages. If you doubt that clerks of the treasury, and other dependants upon government, are enabled to scrape together so much of the public plunder, as

to buy rotten-boroughs by wholesale, study the political life of Mr. *Rose*; you will find that by prostituting peerages, bestowing places and pensions upon particular individuals, promoting their families (no matter how worthless or insignificant) and the like; what is called a government interest in certain boroughs is secured—or in other words, a right in the administration to return whatever men they choose to represent, *not the people*, but the *administration* in parliament, and to vote as they shall nod and direct.

Now, Citizens, permit me to take a short review of the consequences of all this, and with that short review I shall close that dry part of this course of Lectures, which consists in the statement of calculations. I am not sure that I shall not now and then have occasion to intersperse my Lectures with such statements, but they will not, for the future, furnish the body. I began with stating facts: I shall now go on to demonstrate principles: and, having done that, I shall endeavour to point out in what manner the grievances may be removed, and those principles may be peaceably carried into execution.

Let me then beg your serious attention, because I know these facts, however feebly I may state them to you, will furnish matter for important deliberation. Let us consider, in the first place, what is the effect of all this to the great body of the people. In the first place, the wages of this corruption must be paid from the revenue; and what is the revenue? Is it not the produce of the taxes? And how are these taxes paid? They have been divided, fancifully enough, as *Paine* observes, into two classes—direct and indirect. But I think a very little time will enable me to show you, that of these taxes (direct and indirect) every sixpence is paid by the lower and middling orders of society: that is to say, every thing is paid by the productive labourer: I shall admit, at the same time, that people of small independent property, who have no means of increasing their property, are also most grievous and heavy sufferers by the growth of taxation. But I think I shall be able to prove, that though the great proprietor and wealthy merchant talk of taxes, they in reality pay none; the whole is paid by the productive labourers; who are the great strength and pillar of every community. For what is the taxation? Every tax is, it is true, so much money taken out of the pockets of the respective people on whom it is assessed. But what is that money? It is only the



sign and representative of that which really constitutes the wealth of the nation. What then constitutes the real wealth of the nation? The fruits of the national industry: its agricultural productions! its manufacturing productions! These are the real wealth, the real riches, the real grandeur and power of the state.

By whom are these produced? Are they produced by the great lord, in his ermine robes? Are they produced by the wealthy merchant? or by those respectable and truly valuable (though despised and neglected classes) the labourers in husbandry and manufactures?

But this is not the only way to prove that all the taxes are paid by the common people. I think I can shew you, that every class of people, except those I am now speaking of, have the power of shifting the taxes from their own shoulders; but that no such power is possessed by the productive labourers; and therefore upon them, in the last resort, must the burden of taxation fall.

As taxes increase, and the necessities and luxuries of life advance, the landed proprietor increases his rent; he breaks up his little farms and makes them into large ones, to collect a larger revenue; and by a thousand ways takes care that his income shall keep pace, at least, with the growing burdens of the state. Nay, he does more; as public burdens increase, the luxury and extravagancy of the higher orders of society are increasing also.

The farmer, in his turn, increases the price of his commodity. In proportion as his rents are raised, he raises the price of the corn he takes to the market:—and he has a right so to do; I do not blame him—I do not blame individuals—I blame the vices and diseases of the system. I wish to eradicate these: I do not wish to stir up ungente feelings in your minds against any man or class of men.

Does not the merchant, in the same way, increase the price of his articles? Does not the manufacturer increase the price of his commodities? and are there not combinations of these great dealers to raise the price of their commodities whenever it is necessary, and to keep down the price of labour, in such a manner that *commerce may not be hurt*—while the laws punish the laborious classes who associate in the same way as criminals, and confine them as felons?

I grant, there are particular trades which do not come under this description; whose labourers are numerous and pressed together;

together; and who, by a sort of insurrection, extort that justice which they cannot otherwise obtain. But is this a thing to be desired? Will you uphold a system by which the common people can have no relief but from violence? If you will, you are the *organizers of anarchy*, and make *confusion and insurrection the order of the day*. But, can the great mass of labouring people combine together? Can the labourers in agriculture—these main pillars of social life! nay, those very germs of our existence!—have they the powers of associating, and compelling those who employ them to proportion their wages to the burthen? On the contrary, I have known even the wishes of the Farmers themselves, to do them justice, frustrated by a few purse-proud individuals, who have stepped forward, with cruel and insulting menaces, to prevent the raising of their wages, in conformity with the exigencies of the times.

Thus the higher orders shift the whole of the burden from themselves; and the middling orders shift off the greater part of it, in their turn. The middling orders, however, when the burden becomes very inordinate, have their share of it: the little shop-keeper must be ruined: the man who used to maintain his family in credit must be reduced to bankruptcy; he cannot always increase his prices proportionately; his commodities, from general distress, decrease in their consumption; and thus, from the decay of trade, bankruptcy, misery, and bare-foot wretchedness, succeed to decency, plenty, and expected competency.

This is the situation of many who once vainly hoped, in their old age, to lay their heads in the lap of Indulgence, and smile to see a family flourishing in happiness and opulence.—But the great oppression certainly lies upon the labouring poor; which in some of my statements I have shewn. I find, however, that some suppose I have misrepresented the fact; not recollecting that the facts I stated related to the pay of labourers in husbandry, which is much smaller than that of workmen in large cities. I shall beg you, therefore, to remember that I am speaking only of the country labourers; but that the facts, with respect to *proportionate calculation*, though not with respect to the particular prices, would equally apply in the case of artificers and manufacturers.—If it is true that workmen in great cities receive greater wages now than the labourers in husbandry, it is true that it always was the case, and therefore the proportionate diminution is the



the same; and it is the proportionate diminution to which I principally wish to call your attention.

Now then for a few facts, to shew the connexion between *taxation, corruption*, and the growing miseries of the industrious orders of society.

In *Davis's* excellent book, which, without his seeming to know it, contains in every page the most strong and decided facts to prove the necessity of a complete reform in our system of representation—in this book, “*The Case of Labourers in Husbandry*,” we have a comparative statement of the prices of labour and of the necessaries of life, at five different periods, to which I shall add a sixth, to bring the question home.

Now, take this great fact with you, that the nominal price of labour is nothing. It matters not whether a man receives five farthings or five shillings a day. The quantity of the necessaries of life which he can get by his labour, is the real price of his industry: and if I can prove that a man could get four times as much for his two-pence a day formerly, as he can for his fourteen-pence per day now, I prove that the condition of the lower orders is four times worse than it formerly was.

Now, Citizens, in the middle of the 14th century (when we had no taxes, and no corruption) the ordinary price of a day's labour in husbandry was 2d.; the price of a quarter of wheat from 3s. 4d. to 4s.: the medium was 3s. 8d.—Now follow some calculations drawn from facts, for which this author refers you particularly to *Bishop Fleetwood's "Chronicon," Burn's "History of the Poor Laws,"* and *Dr. Price "on Reversionary Payments."* In the middle of the 14th century, it seems, 22 days labour would purchase a quarter of wheat; 20 days labour would purchase a fat hog two years old; 20 days labour, clothing for a year for a common servant in husbandry; six days labour would purchase a quarter of beans or peas; five days, a quarter of barley; two days labour would purchase a pair of shoes; and one day's labour, of common husbandry, would buy two gallons of ale.

About the middle of the 15th century (a period also when we had neither taxes nor corruption) the pay of a labourer per day was 3d.; the price of a quarter of wheat 5s. and 5s. 6d.—You will find then, Citizens, that here the increase in the price of provisions, and the increase in the price of labour, had pretty nearly kept pace. You see the condition of the  
labouring

labouring people was even in some degree ameliorated. It cost at that time from 20 to 22 days labour to purchase a quarter of wheat; 16 days labour to purchase a quarter of malt; eight days labour to purchase a quarter of oats; seven days labour to purchase a flitch of bacon; four days labour to purchase a yard of cloth, for a shepherd; and one day's labour to purchase two or three gallons of ale.

Now, Citizens, for the third period.—At the former part of the 16th century, the price of a day's labour was 3d. half-penny, and the price of a quarter of wheat about 7s. 6d.—(It is worth observing how nearly the price of labour here was regulated, for three centuries, by the price of the principal articles of necessity!)—26 days labour would purchase a quarter of wheat; 13 or 14 days a quarter of malt; seven days, a quarter of oats; one day, eight or nine pounds of beef, pork or veal: and one day's labour would purchase 7lb. of cheese, or 4lb. of butter.

Now let us go to the fourth period (the middle of the 17th century) when taxation and corruption had begun, and see what an immediate change took place in the condition of the industrious orders of society. In *Essex*, the day's labour had then risen to 1s. 1d. One would suppose, from this great and sudden rise of wages, that in that period, of about 120 years, the labouring poor had got into a paradise of plenty! and yet mark the facts, and see how grossly we abuse ourselves, when we say, because wages increase, that the price of labour has kept pace with the price of the necessary articles of consumption. The price of wheat, at that time, was from 40 to 42s. per quarter, so that, instead of 22, they were obliged to employ 37 days labour to purchase a quarter of wheat; 22 days labour for a quarter of malt; seven days for a quarter of oats; and four days and a half's labour to purchase two shirts ready made.

Now, Citizens, I will come, if you please, to the latter part of the eighteenth century; that is, in reality, to the years from 1790 to 1792. I shall state a few facts of this æra, and then you will see what advance has been made in the price of the necessaries of life, and what advance on the price of labour. You will see when Corruption, like an overflowing flood, began to sweep away every valuable principle from the heart of man, and when the lust of power banished each generous and gentle feeling from the soul, what became of the just balance and proportion between the prices of labour and  
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the prices of the necessaries of life. You will see who are the people that bear the burdens while great Ministers and politic Lords are swelling to immense wealth and luxury.—In the latter part of the eighteenth century, the price of a day's labour is 1s. 2d. It is so now throughout that part of the country I have visited. I enquired scrupulously myself, of the masters who employed, and of the men who were employed. Wherever I went, I put my head into the farmhouse to collect what facts I could, and into the little public-house, and the cottage of the poor, where I have seen the husbandman, time after time, making his meal off a bit of bread and a little skimmed milk; and, where they had not the opportunity of keeping a cow, bread and water—bread and water, fellow-citizens! was all that rewarded the toil of those individuals, but for whom bread itself would not be enjoyed by the luxurious and the proud! Fourteen-pence per day then, two or three years back, as now, was the price of a day's labour; and the consequence was, that (wheat being 48s. and malt 42s. 6d.) 41 days labour was necessary to buy a quarter of the former; and 36 days to buy a quarter of the latter. In short, instead of 22 days labour, 41 were necessary to purchase a quarter of wheat; instead of 16 days, 36 and a half to purchase a quarter of malt; and instead of 20, 96 days labour to buy a good fat hog: instead of six days labour, 27 or 28 were requisite to buy a quarter of beans or peas; instead of five days labour, 20 or 21 days, to purchase a quarter of barley; instead of seven days, 41 days labour to buy a fitch of bacon; instead of four days, nine days labour to purchase a yard of cloth for servants; instead of two days, six days labour to purchase a pair of shoes; and whereas one day's labour would purchase two or three gallons of ale, in the middle of the 14th century, one day's labour was then the price of a single gallon; one day's labour also would procure then but three pounds of ordinary cheese, or a pound and a half of butter, instead of seven pounds of cheese, or four pounds of butter; and instead of labouring 20 days, 40 days labour were necessary to purchase raiment for a year, for a common serving man,

But, Citizens, great and enormous as this increase appears, it shrinks into insignificance, when compared with the increase that has taken place since the commencement of this desolating war—a war, in which, seeking to ruin France, we have ruined ourselves: raving for the destruction and annihilation

lation of Gallic liberty; we have destroyed the sources of our own felicity, till ruin and misery have lifted up their fiend-like arms, and brandishing the scourge of famine over our heads, have rendered misery, unspeakable misery, the lot of that branch of the community who deserve the warmest affections of our hearts, and our most zealous efforts for the amelioration of their condition.

I have extracted from The Morning Chronicle an account of the returns of the Corn-Market; and I mention the fact more particularly, to shew you what infamous and barefaced falsehoods are palmed upon you by the ministerial papers—for the purpose, one would suppose, of stirring up confusion in the country, that thereby they may give the Minister an opportunity of establishing a military despotism over us. Yes, Citizens, the wretch who wishes to point out the Miller, the Baker, or the Butcher, as the oppressor, can have no other view but to excite commotion, and produce the destruction of these innocent men. Innocent, I say; for though I do not mean to say there is no such thing as monopoly—yet I am sure that monopoly could not exist, but for that system of borough-mongering corruption, a part of the spawn of which it is. But, generally speaking, I am conscious that the dealers in the necessary articles of life are themselves as much injured and oppressed as the consumers: and he who endeavours to make you believe the contrary, can have no other view but to divert your attention from the real source of the calamity, and fix your indignation upon men who, being within your reach, may fall, perhaps, victims to mistaken vengeance, and thus furnish a pretence for that despotism, for the establishment, of which nothing but a *pretence* is wanted.

When day after day I read in “the True Briton,” as it is called—O that *Britons* should bear that name to be thus libelled, and scandalized by the dirtiest dependent of the dirtiest scribe of a corrupt administration!—I lose all patience—I forget disease and infirmity, and can restrain myself no longer, when I find this once brave and generous nation so basely insulted and degraded.—When day after day I have read in this paper, and in the “Times,” accounts that the prices of those articles were falling in the markets—that the commodities are coming in in great plenty, and that therefore monopolies among the bakers and butchers, and the connivance of the *Lord Mayor*, for such things they dare to insinuate, are the real causes of



the misfortune; I have burned with indignation to observe circumstances thus stated, which those who state them must know to be false; and which there is reason to believe are nevertheless sanctioned by high authority: for I have been told, by one of the proprietors of the "Times," that scarcely a paragraph is inserted but what is formally transmitted in the French language; the production of some of those emigrant rascals who enjoy the confidence of *gentlemen high in office*, and who, having brought ruin and calamity upon their own country, come here to bring the same ruin and calamity on us. But, Citizens, I have here accounts of a different kind, in a less questionable shape, which I am going to state, and the accuracy of which I have ascertained by proper inquiries and authorities that cannot be doubted, and which enable me to say, at the very time when the ministerial papers had the audacity to say, that the prices of these articles were lowering in the market, they were actually rising every day.

Having shewn the foundations I have to depend upon for the statement before me, I proceed to observe—that new English wheat was last market day from 82 to 86s. per quarter; the average 84s.; which was from one to two shillings more than it had been sold at the preceding market day? though the "Times," of that day asserted, that that it had considerably fallen. Foreign wheat was from 70 to 76s.; medium 73s. English barley, new, 35s. malt 4s.; old field oats 26s.; new oats 25s. and flour 70s. per sack.

Now then, Citizens, what is the result? That a man who could once get a quarter of wheat for 22 days labour, must now work 74 days for the same quantity. Remember I am speaking of the labourer in husbandry; the proportionate decline, as I told you before, is the same in town; the exact quantum of injury is the same, though the nominal sums are different. He must now labour 46 days to purchase a quarter of malt. To this let me add, that instead of *six* days he must labour from 48 to 65 days to buy a quarter of beans or peas. Such then, Citizens, with respect to the articles of the greatest necessity, are the monstrous inconveniencies to which the labouring part of the community are at present subjected.

If you put together the whole of the facts I have thus stated, this conclusion immediately results; that as corruption and taxation have kept pace, so has the misery, the ruin, and depression of the great body of the people, gone hand in hand with these burdens. They will oblige you to draw this conclusion also, that with respect to the great mass, whatever may be the case with the intermediate orders, it would be better that even the age of feudal tyranny were restored, than that the tyranny of rotten borough-mongers should be established over us: a tyranny the most expensive, and, as it is supported by the labour, the groans and anguish of the great body of the people, ought to be considered as the greatest scourge that ever afflicted the universe.

What signifies then the fine, metaphysical, high-spun arguments of *Winaham*? I speak not from irritation—I wish not to stir up any ungentle feelings. I am not hurt at being called “an acquitted felon.” If it be felony to speak truth, and to unmask corruption, I glory in being a felon; and will endeavour to be the greatest felon in Britain: and if I do not attain it, it shall be for want of power, not of endeavour. I am prouder of that title, gained in such a cause, than Mr. *Windham* or any of his family can be of the titles and dignities they carry about them. I would rather bear this title with a halter round my neck, as the badge of my order, than wear the *blue ribband* apostacy round my knee, or be decorated with any of those baubles which please the minds of men in their second childhood when they become once more pleased with a rattle, and tickled with a straw.

But to a hungry people what signify the metaphysics of *Wyndham*, splitting the hair of nothingness in twain, and then arguing which portion of *non-entity* is most *substantial*? What signifies listening to such hyperboles and scientific nonsense, as make up the *airy nothing* of this gentleman's speeches, when he attempts to demonstrate our *negative successes* and mystical felicities? Let us appeal to facts: and if the condition of the people is growing worse and worse, and if we can trace these calamities to the corruption of boroughmongering usurpations, let us join heart in hand to redress these corruptions—Let us, with the voice of reason, with the energies of intellect, seek for the



the remedy where alone it can be found. Let us call aloud, again and again, till redress is given to our wrongs, and till the people are restored to their ancient inherent right to annual parliaments and universal suffrage.

What signify the *lullabies* of *Burke*—the narcotics and soporifics with which he would charm us to sleep? or the visions and frenzies with which he would disturb our slumbers? What signify his pious ravings and meditations of the rewards to be conferred upon us in another world? Why should not this world, also, be rendered tolerable to us?

Citizens, it is true, as a well-known Citizen observed, when he first heard this reflection, it is very well to have a good inn in prospect, where one may put up at night; but why should we be starved to death upon the road? Let us think also where we are to breakfast and to dine. As for the rest, stay till the time comes when you are to put on your night-cap; and doubt not, if the day be well spent that the slumber will be sweet. Do not suffer yourselves to be deluded with the idea that the Deity (if a Deity there be) can be such a Being; that the only way to obtain his favour hereafter is to be miserable while we are here: as though he had not the power, or the inclination, to impart felicity both in this world and the other!

## THE TRIBUNE. N<sup>o</sup>. XXXV.

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The Connection between the CALAMITIES of the PRESENT REIGN, and the SYSTEM of BOROUGH-MONGERING CORRUPTION —LECTURE THE THIRD.—*The Connection between Parliamentary Corruption and Commercial Monopoly: with Strictures on the WEST-INDIA SUBSCRIPTION, &c.* Delivered Wednesday Oct. 14. 1795.

CITIZENS,

I Have this night particularly to request of the numerous friends of liberty and order, that they will be cool, and collected, and not suffer the illiberality of a few beings of another description to throw them into confusion. I have also, to admonish those few individuals who came for the purpose of disturbance, that it will be for their credit not to be over hasty; because if they begin to hiss before they have heard any thing, people will know they came with a determination to disturb and not to hear; and therefore it will be impossible for their conspiracy to have any effect. When men calling themselves *gentlemen*, and in the *garb* of gentlemen, begin to hiss at the bottom of the stairs, and ill-treat the door-keepers, we know what sort of beings they are; they proclaim themselves at once to be a part of those reptiles spawned and cherished in the pool of corruption, who are fearful lest the rays of truth should dry up this stagnant pool, and deprive them of the sources of their noxious existence.

Let them not however flatter themselves, that a few such reptiles, spitting their frothy venom in my way, can check my course. I should ill discharge the duties of my situation, were I, from such poor terrors, to forbear the free investigation of every species of abuse which the corruption of the times

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engenders. I knew from the first, that this investigation must inevitably create innumerable swarms of enemies among all classes of men: for where is the class in which corruption is not to be found?

But these circumstances, although they may put us upon our guard, cannot, if we are seriously attached to the cause of liberty, turn us from the course of enquiry. He who feels his mind actuated by the love of the human race, regardless of such enmity, and despising such hostility, will proceed with fortitude—sometimes annoyed and wounded, and sometimes victorious, but always calm! seeking for consolation in the consciousness only of his own rectitude, and for reward in the affection and esteem of the worthy part of that species whose rights he vindicates, and whose happiness he endeavours to promote.

The particular part of the subject which it is my duty to investigate this evening, is the aristocracy of the Royal Exchange; an aristocracy which, though sanctioned by no legal authority, and decorated with no trappings of distinction, is I believe in reality as important a pillar in the temple of corruption, as any of those that are to be found in the avowed plan of the state architects of this temple. Let me not, however, be misunderstood, when I speak in terms of strong reprobation of the aristocracy of commerce.—If I find myself compelled to mark with decided censure the present corrupt and monopolizing system, at the shrine of which not only the happiness and the liberties, but even the very lives of the great mass of mankind are inhumanly sacrificed, let it not be supposed that I mean to condemn the system of commerce altogether.

Commerce, uncorrupted by monopolizing speculation, is one of greatest advantages that result from social union. It is by this that the comforts and accommodations of each quarter of the globe are transplanted to every other, and that every individual spot of the universe might be benefitted by the knowledge of all the rest. A fair and liberal spirit of commerce has a considerable tendency to inform the understanding of mankind, to increase the progress of intelligence, and above all, to do away the ridiculous and destructive prejudices of nationality.—The intercourse of man with man, and nation with nation, of the trader of one country with the trader of another,

ther, if conducted on liberal and equal principles, must certainly remove the delusive idea that humanity and virtue are the attributes of a particular soil, and convince us that we ought to extend the narrow sphere of our affections, and in all our schemes of justice and policy, to regard alike the happiness and welfare of the whole universe; because all the inhabitants of the universe are but one family, linked together by correspondent sympathies, and endued with the same faculties of sense and reason—the same passions and necessities—the same powers of virtue and frailties of vice—in fine, the same faculties to impart and to enjoy the reciprocations and improvements which constitute the happiness and security of the whole.

But it is one thing to admire the genuine principle of commerce, it is another to countenance its abuses. It does not follow, because commerce, simply considered, is good, that the present system is good also: a system in which speculation has banished the fair and equitable process of exchange, and in which monopoly has destroyed the free energies of the human character, and counteracted all the benevolent tendencies which I have before described!

A Citizen, whose name is Wadstrom, has very lately obliged the world with a publication of very considerable merit, in which he even doubts whether the system of "Speculation-Commerce," ought to be tolerated in the world at all. He is disposed to consider that the only kind of commerce really advantageous to mankind, is that which he calls "Commission Commerce,"—by which particular individuals undertake to supply the wants under which other individuals actually labour; instead of seeking to produce or accumulate commodities in hopes thereby of exciting artificial wants, provoking the demand and increasing the consumption.

It is not my intention to enter this evening into a question so complicated and abstruse. You will perceive at once that it involves the important dilemma of simplicity or luxury; and many other considerations that would shake several of the most settled habits of what is called refined and polished society; and I shall freely acknowledge, that to do any thing like justice to it, would demand a much larger portion of commercial knowledge than I



pretend to possess. But I will say, that undoubtedly there is great force of conviction in parts, at least, of the system he has laid down; and that we shall certainly find, if we examine and probe the subject to the bottom, that the spirit of speculation has destroyed the fair, honest, and manly character of traffic; and that at present (though the open barter only appears in the infamous African slave-trade) almost all the inhabitants of the universe are rendered, as it were, the saleable commodities of a few engrossers and monopolists, who still assume the name of merchants, but are no longer worthy of the character once attached to that name.

Notwithstanding all this, there are many who still maintain that the mercantile system, even as it now stands, is friendly to Liberty: and a fanciful writer, who has lately stepped forward to support the corruptions of the Commons' House of Parliament, has carried this opinion to a most wild extent. This author's name is *Peacock*. He is, it is true, a member of one of those privileged orders, who are very unwilling that any existing corruption should be touched, even with the little finger of Reform, and has accordingly endeavoured to support that excellent position laid down by Mr. Pitt and Lord Mornington, that *the corruptions of the House of Commons constitute the principal excellence of the British Constitution*, and that, if you remove these corruptions, every thing that is admirable and excellent in that constitution will fade and crumble away. This *Peacock*, in the midst of his wild vagaries, has taken it into his head to maintain, that the commercial interest in this country is a republican interest; and that, in fact, the republican interest is in danger of getting too much ascendancy in the constitution, in consequence of the share of representation already possessed by the mercantile interest.

This opinion is not peculiar to this man; and therefore I shall examine it a little. I know that many specious arguments might be advanced, from history, that would tend to substantiate this opinion. We might be told, for example, that *Athens*, one of the greatest commercial cities of antiquity, was a republic. But remember, *Athens* did not owe its republicanism to its commerce; neither did *Athens* owe its commerce to its republicanism. The republicanism of *Athens* sprung from an example of such generous and magnanimous virtue, as, I am afraid, we shall not see imitated by many Kings of the modern world. *Theseus* ascended the throne

throne of *Athens* as hereditary sovereign of that country; but, some how or other, *Theseus* got the mad jacobinical idea into his head, that it was not for the welfare and happiness of the human race, that even such a territory as *Athens* should be under the controul of one man. With a disinterested patriotism, that must endear his name to all true lovers of Liberty, *Theseus* therefore, resigning his power, laid the foundation of that republic, whose energies of mind astonished the admiring universe, and have left the modern kingdoms and empires of the world, "with base despair, to wonder at its greatness, "and mourn their fall degenerate!"—This republic was afterwards consolidated by the wise and excellent laws of *Solon*; and, so long as his institutions remained pure, and unadulterated with the baneful mixture of aristocratic corruption, the genius, the grandeur and power of that republic rose triumphant: and so far was this freedom from owing its origin to commerce, that, when commerce had swelled to an inordinate degree, and had poured into that city its tide of riches, luxury, and corruption, down fell the splendid edifice of Athenian Liberty, and Aristocracy, and consequent Anarchy, spread devastation, not only through that particular state, but through the whole Grecian confederacy.

But, Citizens, it may be supposed that this tendency of commerce to republicanism may be better supported by the instance of the Italian republics; and *Genoa*, *Venice*, and *Florence*, may be brought forward to substantiate the strange assertion that *Peacock* has made. Remember, however, that the commerce which prevailed at the time when these republics were founded, was a very different system from that which now prevails, and to which, alone, Mr. *Peacock*, if he means any thing, must mean to allude. Remember, also, that all is not gold that glitters; and that it is not the mere name of republicanism that produces liberty. In fact, republicanism, both in the ancient and modern world, has been but too frequently made a cloak to conceal the usurpations of the most tyrannical aristocracy. Surely the advocates of Commerce cannot boast much of the liberty enjoyed by those Italian republics, when we reveal their internal structure, their system of spies and informers, so excellently imitated of late by those supporters of the present administration, who, with a sort of Harlequin's dagger of lath, have converted Mr. *Reeves* into a lion's mouth, to receive and act upon all the anonymous calumny which political prostitution or revenge may dictate.

*Carthage,*



*Carthage*, at a time when a few monied aristocrats exercised the most despotic tyranny over it, was still called a republic. *Holland*, before the late revolution, still maintained the name of a republic; yea, and had its House of Representatives, with this difference, indeed, from ours—that *their Representatives* were *openly* and *avowedly* named by the aristocracy and adherents of the chief magistrate of that country. *France* also was called a republic in the days of *Robespierre*: whose sanguinary measures the *Dictator* of another country seemed so well disposed to imitate, though he had neither courage nor genius to carry his intentions into execution. Nay, the present Convention, at the very instant when they are trampling upon the glorious principles of Liberty and Equality, for which the nation has been so long contending, and endeavouring to force a tyrannic decree down the throats of the people (in imitation of an honourable assembly in another nation) by a garbled report, patched and fabricated in a Secret Committee—at this very instant the Convention talk of consolidating the Republic.—It is high time that men should be awakened from their trance, and see that not names, but principles, should be the object of their attachment; that it is the liberty of the human race, and not the nick-name that may be given to a constitution, that is worth contending for. It is not pulling down one tyranny, and setting up another, that is worth contention. It matters not what shape a government may assume, if its real operation is to sacrifice the happiness of the many to the interests of a few: nor is it matter of much consequence whether the Aristocrats that domineer over us, were nursed in the lap of Nobility, brought up in the counting-houses of monopolizing merchants, or produced in the ferment of civil commotion, from what are insultingly called the dregs and refuse of the people. The tyranny of the Dagger, and the tyranny of Monopolists, equally destroy the freedom of the human character—nay, equally destroy the comforts and *lives* of the human race, though the assassinations of the latter are more silent and secret than those of the former.

The fact is, Citizens, that there can be no liberty where there is not a simplicity of manners, a fortitude of character, and a pure and generous system of morality. This simplicity, this fortitude, and this morality constitute the true essence of liberty so necessary to the welfare and happiness of mankind: but which never can be attained where the true equality of man is not recognized in this plain maxim, that *laws made for*  
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*the government of all ought to receive the sanction and approbation of all, either personally, or by representation.* Every individual defrauded of the right of giving his sanction to these laws is, in reality, a slave: and freedom is to him but an empty sound that vibrates upon his ear, but conveys no privilege to his heart

This liberty, though never yet enjoyed in absolute perfection, has, I shall shew you, existed in a much more considerable degree in countries that were not commercial than in countries that are. For example, will any man pretend to say that *Switzerland* owes its liberty to commerce? Does the little republic of *San Marino* owe its liberty to the commercial aggrandizement of a few individuals? No, a just system of mild and equal laws has contributed to secure the happiness of that little republic; and shewn us (such a bubble is the pretended balance of power!) that the weakest and smallest state, adopting the principles of justice, moderation, peace and liberty, may maintain its independence in the midst of powerful and rival nations. It is true, indeed, that in the ancient republic of *Acaia* commerce was carried on to a very considerable extent: and yet, in the midst of this commerce, *Acaia* of old (like *San Marino* of modern times) a small diminutive city, maintained its independence, its freedom, and its virtue, without the assistance of *Janissaries* to protect it, or combinations of military despots to fight its battles. But the commerce of *Acaia* was conducted upon principles which at this time are not understood. Commerce was not there carried on for the exclusive advantage and emolument of a few. No, by the excellent institutions of the state it was made to produce equal advantage to every citizen of the community. Every man participated not only in the labour, but in the profit: unlike those countries where all the burden is thrown upon one class of the people, and the whole of the advantage is engrossed by another.

Let me be understood. I do not wish, by this example, to enforce any ideas of pecuniary equality. These notions, wickedly broached by Reeves and his coadjutors, I leave to those who had the profligacy to attempt to set them afloat. I would not recommend that those institutions should be shaken which enable men individually to reap the profit of their individual exertions. No, I am convinced that it is by this individual independence that the general happiness and welfare might, in the present state of society, be best promoted. But at the same time, do not fall into the opposite extreme by countenancing



tenancing laws that throw all power and emolument into the hands of those who, from their superior wealth, possess already too much authority. I would not have you, by countenancing systems by which this monopoly is supported, sacrifice the interests of the great body of the people, to an ideal notion of wealth and grandeur; which means neither more nor less, when properly translated, than the depression, beggary, and starving misery of the great body of the people. This may sound like paradox, but it is nevertheless true: for what do you mean to describe when you talk of the grandeur, wealth, and prosperity of a country? Do you mean that all the people are grantees? that all are wealthy?—all are flourishing?—Certainly not.—You mean neither more nor less than this—that a few particular individuals are enabled to display a pomp, luxury and splendour that dazzle the beholder, and inflate his imagination with ideas of superfluous affluence—that your great merchants, courtiers, and favourites of ministers are capable of making expensive feasts, in which the revenues of a province are wasted at a meal, while the people at large—But who thinks of the people? They are nothing. It is the splendid opulence of the heads of the nation that constitutes the power and grandeur of the nation. As for the people: they are only the feet—or, in reality, the dust upon which the feet of greatness ought to trample.

But, Citizens, there is a certain sense in which commerce, even as it is generally conducted, may be favourable to liberty: that is to say, it favors the cause of liberty to a certain extent. It has a tendency to dispel the midnight of ignorance, and to introduce some feeble rays of light and knowledge among mankind. It has a tendency, also, by the respectability that attaches to mercantile opulence, to weaken that veneration for names and hereditary distinctions, which, however excellent in their way, ought not to monopolize all the admiration of mankind. In this point of view commerce has been useful in this country. At the first revival of knowledge, after the darkness and ignorance of the middle centuries, the spirit of trade did much towards the emancipation of mankind; and by setting up a formidable barrier against the feudal despotism of the Barons, broke, undoubtedly, that yoke of intolerable slavery which those military barbarians had imposed upon the great mass of the people. But if commerce formerly broke the chains of *feudal tyranny*, it is now riveting the equally intolerable chains of corruption and influence.

To

To illustrate this observation I will refer you to the bargains and agreements made between a few great commercial houses, and the leaders of the administration of this country: and you will, then, I believe, admit that the present system of corruption could not be supported, if it were not for a certain combination between the monopolists of the Royal Exchange and the Borough-mongers of St. Stephen's Chapel. This combination has been for a considerable time in existence. Its extent and power, however, are growing day after day: and its fatal effects have never been so considerable as at present.

Unfortunately for the happiness and repose of mankind, at the altar of this combination every principle of justice and humanity has too frequently been sacrificed. War and destruction, not peace and political amelioration, are the means by which it is supported; and however strange it may appear—however contradictory to our general speculations, the harvest of our commercial prosperity, as it is called, is to the great body of the people, continual havock and desolation.

It is very true that, generally speaking, Peace is the nurse of Commerce; and therefore it may be supposed that I advance an hypothesis that cannot be supported, when I say that the emoluments of these commercial monopolists are as considerable from the system of war and desolation as the profits of ministers are admitted to be.—I say *admitted*, because every man knows that war is a great promoter of patronage; and patronage is the harvest of a corrupt administration.

But remark a distinction here. It is true that the *national* advantages of commerce can only be secured by peace. But the general advantage is one thing, the particular is another: and it is to the particular advantage that I wish to draw your attention. For this purpose it is necessary to digress a little into a history of the commercial system.

Commerce, in the first instance, undoubtedly consisted in the mere exchange of commodities: one country bringing its superabundant production to another where it was likely to find a superabundance of some other commodity of which it stood in need. So long as this system continued commerce must, undoubtedly, have promoted the general welfare of mankind. Nay, when the more improved state of society introduces a medium to supersede this cumbrous barter, still the benefit to society continues, so long as the commodities necessary for the sustenance and comfort of man are the real objects of commerce. But when the comforts of the many come



to be exchanged for the luxuries of the few—when the hatchet of the husbandman is enhanced in its price to load the side-board of the noble, or the merchant, with the guilty produce of Mexican and Peruvian mines—and above all when the necessities of life (particularly grain) become articles, not of *open* traffic, but of commercial speculation;—when tricks of every description are played to aggravate their price, and government itself presumes to dabble in these speculations, then commerce which should be advantageous to the universe, becomes destructive to the happiness, and even to the existence of man.

In the progress, however, of commercial degeneracy there is another step that ought to be noticed. Commodities, when commerce is fairly considered, are the *objects* of exchange: but money, from having been agreed upon as a token, and common medium to facilitate exchange, has become itself the object of traffic. *Money* (not commodities) is the article in which your great commercial monopolist wishes to become a dealer: and it is easy to prove that war is peculiarly favourable to *this* trade; though most unfavourable to a fair and honest traffic.

I am well aware, Citizens, that this part of the subject will require some degree of pains on my part, and on your's more attention than is usually paid in places of this kind. We have so long been used to consider commerce in the aggregate, that few of us are disposed to make these necessary distinctions. My distinctions, however, are simply these—Fair commerce deals in commodities necessary for the comfort and advantage of mankind. Monopoly deals, not in these articles, or, at least, not exclusively in these articles; but builds its profits upon a traffic in money itself: a traffic which frequently raises a few individuals to enormous opulence—but produces no benefit whatever to the people at large. It is, in short, a sort of political whirl-pool, which having once acquired a given force, sucks every thing into its vortex, and in proportion as it increases in power and magnitude, extends its destructive influence through a wider circle. This traffic is principally carried on between the speculative monopolist and the government: as for instance, in the article of loans. A minister bargains with a merchant, or given number of merchants, to furnish him, or rather *cause him to be furnished*, with such a quantity of money; for which he secures him such and such an avowed interest; such and such a premium to augment that interest; and such and such bonuses and douceurs, as they are called. Thus the minister is enabled, on the one hand, to  
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keep the wheels of corruption going, and the merchant, on the other, reaps an emolument by the sale of his money—or as it may frequently happen, by the mere *pawn of his credit*, which no other species of commerce could bring into his coffers.

Now the necessity of loans is produced by immoderate expenditure: immoderate expenditure is encreased by war; this traffic of money, therefore, so destructive to the people, at whose expence it is carried on, but so profitable to the opulent speculatist, is carried to a more considerable extent in time of war than in peace; and thus have your monied men, so long as national credit will hold, an interest in promoting that system of war, which mankind at large, have so much reason to execrate. If this had been thoroughly understood there would have been no difficulty in accounting for the avidity with which the meeting at Merchant Taylors' Hall plunged the country into a ruinous and profligate war.

From this mutual interest proceeds a sort of compact between certain individuals at one end of the town and certain individuals at the other; which fairly translated into the vulgar tongue means this—Do you protect us in our monopoly of boroughs, and we will protect you in monopolizing particular branches of traffic. To this combination it is that both parties so frequently sacrifice every principle and feeling of humanity. To support this secret convention it was that the minister, who upon all other occasions can command a majority, suffered his power to be paralyzed when the interests of humanity were at stake; and, while he indulged his *feelings* by vehemently exclaiming against the most atrocious system of murder and depredation that ever was dignified by the name of commerce (I mean the detestable Slave Trade) rather than offend his city connections, gave a fly wink to his condescending majority, to vote in opposition to his arguments: and thus, Citizens, what with this fine management, and the finesse of that great politician *Henry Dundas*, the English nation, after having expressed its almost unanimous wish for the abolition, was compelled to continue this abominable traffic. But France abolished it, though we would not; for abolished in effect, it is:—more than abolished:—premature emancipation is rushing upon the kidnapped sons of Africa. What the scenes may be, through which these unfortunate islands have yet to pass—what the calamities of this struggle of emancipation, I cannot pretend to divine: and fain would I draw a veil over the melancholy prospect. But with respect to West-India slavery, it is abolished: its final doom is fixed.



It may, perhaps, keep up a struggling, feeble existence, for a little time; but the period cannot be distant, when the West-India islands will be cultivated by slaves no more—when the West-India islands will be no more dependent upon any European power: and for my own part, Citizens, I own that I cannot very much lament the prospect of this separation. I am convinced, that the doctrines of Justice are always the doctrines of Expediency; and that, when you suffer Principle, god-like Principle! above all things, to dictate your conduct, you do in reality the most politic thing that can possibly be done. Every country having a right to independency—every country having a right to chuse its own government, I should be led, in the first instance, to suppose it for the happiness and welfare of the whole, that these rights should be exercised and enjoyed. But it is not only by argument *a priori* that I am induced to form this conclusion. What examination I have been enabled to give the subject, convinces me that it would be a happy thing for the universe in general, and for Britain in particular, if there were no such a thing as a colony or dependency in the political system of the universe. I am convinced the people would be more happy; that a more extensive, but a more fair and equal commerce would be spread all over the world; and that population and happiness would be essentially promoted. I grant at the same time, however, that this would not be equally advantageous to those commercial monopolists of whom I am speaking; for if this independence should ever take place, Trade must be open! Traffic must be free! and every individual, and every country, must have a fair and equal opportunity of struggling for a share of this general commerce. The consequence would be, that, from the spirit of general rivalry, every article would be sold at the lowest price by which a living profit could be obtained; and do you not immediately perceive, that it would be for the happiness of the people that every article should be so disposed of?

But your monopolists would be injured; and therefore a fresh armament is to be equipped for the *West-Indies*, with the vain and hopeless expectation of preventing a catastrophe which is inevitable: which may be delayed, perhaps, for a few years, but which never can be permanently prevented. The principle is broad awake; and no drug, in all the shops of all the political quack doctors, who have so long been dosing us with their potions and their pills, can send it to sleep

sleep again. But still we are to struggle with Despair: like men who, in their sleep, dream they are running, and though their feet are clogged with the bed-cloaths, endeavour to kick and sprawl about; so in our dream of conquering the *West-India* islands, we send our fleets, with the best blood of the country, stored with necessaries for which our poor at home are starving, to flounder and sprawl, and buffet the adverse elements, till, faint and exhausted, we wake from the delirious slumber, and find that we have toiled in vain.

Thus do we plunge the country in still deeper anguish, to prolong the feverish existence of that system of monopoly with which the Minister has much reason to be pleased, but which the people have equal reason to curse, from their very hearts.—It is not enough that magazines of provisions are to be established upon our coasts, that the *Chouans* and *Vendeeans* may have bread, while Britons starve. Stores are also to be sent to the *West-Indies*, and, in the chance of war, perhaps, to be committed to the waves or the devouring flames; while the starving people fix their imploring eyes upon their betrayers, expecting in vain their iron hearts to melt in compassion for their miseries and their sufferings.

Citizens, there is another part of this curious system upon which I must say a few words: I mean the subscriptions which you have seen advertised in the public papers.—Citizens, I am aware how ungracious a task it is to represent, in unfavourable colours, a transaction of this kind. But let the facts be stated, and let Reason judge, whether this indeed be charity, or only a state-trick to bolster up the popularity of a measure which so many circumstances conspire to render odious. I wish not to assign a selfish motive where a generous one can be found; unless the weight of argument is such that justice, eternal justice! to which all considerations must bow down, calls upon me to incline my judgment to the unfavourable side: but let us consider a little the nature of this subscription. It is called an act of charity: but Charity has lost its meaning, if it signifies the giving of alms to promote desolation, cruelty, and war. What charity can make amends to the widow who shall lose her husband in this mad crusade? to the child who shall lose his parent? or the aged father who shall lose his child? I shall take no particular notice, at this time, of the strong reasons there are to suspect that collections of this kind are frequently abused and perverted in their application, and rendered subservient to the purposes



purposes of political prostitution, instead of being applied to the noble purposes of benevolence; but I shall take the liberty of shewing you who the movers of this subscription are, and then leave you to judge whether it is, in reality, an exertion of manly liberality, or an artifice to give popularity to a measure to which the people are found to have sense enough to be generally averse.

Permit me to remind you of the circumstances under which this subscription has been brought before you. Let me ask you, in the first place, What is the purpose of the expedition to which this subscription applies? Is it not clear and evident, that the hope of recovering the *West-India* islands is, in reality, the foundation for continuing, during another year, this war of unparalleled desolation?—In what manner is that war to be carried on? An immense loan is to be raised, *in a great measure from these very subscribers* to the predicted widows and orphans of those who are going to inevitable destruction in the *West-India* expedition!—Here is disinterestedness! This mad crusade is thus to be carried on another year, to the destruction of thousands and tens of thousands more of our fellow beings!—Here is humanity!—This is *commercial and political charity*! Thousands more are to be massacred, and a subscription is opened by the *West-India* Merchants and Money-jobbers to make the massacre popular. Millions are to be borrowed, to carry on this massacre; and the people are to bear the burthen! Aye; but the *West-India* Merchants are to have the loan. But remember that lending is in this instance, the most profitable use to which they can apply their money. Nor is this all: the loan itself is made—the war is continued—to defend their monopoly.

Will the mass of the people in this country ever receive 20 millions of advantage from the possession of the whole *East India* Islands, if it were possible to possess them? If not, who are the persons to be advantaged? The combinations of *West India* Merchants; who, having got the planters in their power, reap the profits, and command the price of the article which they dispose of. These are the men who are to reap the advantage! For them this war is to be carried on another year! for them 20 millions more of *British* treasure are to be expended, and the miseries of aggravated famine are to seize upon the vitals of the people. Desolation is to rage on, in *England, France, Germany, and the West-Indies*, that a few individuals may be enabled to carry on one system of monopoly

poly at the East end of the town, and to support another system of monopoly at the West end of the town, which has robbed the people of their rights, their independence, and their suffrages!

A brief statement of facts relative to these loans will shew you how well it is worth the while of these monied men to bolster up a war by an occasional subscription. You are told, it is true, that the money is borrowed at 3 per cent. Yes, but perhaps you borrow at the rate of 58% for 100%. *ergo*, you pay 100% for every 58% which makes it  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent at once. But this is not all. There are the profits of a lottery, by which the morals of the people are to be debauched for the benefit of the higher orders; and there are, also, your bonuses, your douceurs, and a heap of complicated &cs. too mysterious for us plain men to understand. Add to this, the subscriber to these loans is to receive interest from the day the bargain is made, without advancing a single shilling of the capital for six weeks or three months; and a part of it for nine months after subscription. Thus you see, at once, that the stagnation of commerce is compensated to the monied man, by the quick return, and immense interest of his money; and by the power and patronage so advantageous in a thousand shapes and forms, which he thus procures.—Well then who are the men that have brought forward this subscription? Read over the whole list, and scarcely a man will you find among them who is not a dealer in government loans—a government contractor—a government agent—or a West India monopolist. These are the men, then, for whom the people of Britain are to groan, and sweat, and bleed through another campaign; and who, to encourage us in this unnatural contest, make an ostentatious display of their benevolence in subscribing for a month's bread and water for the widows and orphans of those who expose themselves to pestilence and slaughter in their quarrel.

If men want to shew their charity, let them not confine it to sects and descriptions. Let them relieve distress, by whatever cause it may be produced; and not thus hold out their pretended liberality as a lure to tempt mankind to shed their blood in a struggle in which that class of society from which the soldiers and seamen are selected, can have no possible interest.

I now proceed to the remaining branch of my subject, the East India Company; another great pillar of that system of monopolizing corruption which is the source of our calamities.

Here



Here we have at once a single mercantile firm who are said to have entered into a *conspiracy to buy the House of Commons*. Guy Vaux entered into a conspiracy to blow up the parliament—Charles the Second entered into a conspiracy to do without one; and certain terrible fellows, since known by the name of *acquitted felons*, were accused of a conspiracy to reform it. But ask Mr. Pitt, and he will tell you that the most sensible conspiracy of all was that of the East India Company to *buy the parliament*. But after casting up their accounts, and finding they could only buy up one third, they resolved to save their money, and leave that honourable house to its native purity. But though they did not execute their plan, their Nabobs are very well represented in the Commons' House of Parliament: and so long as their charter depends upon parliamentary influence, it is but in little danger. I shall not, at this time, enter at large into the validity of the arguments by which the perpetuity of this charter is supported; nor enlarge upon the parliamentary influence which this company possesses. The late election in the city of London has sufficiently evinced this; and the night is too far spent to suffer me to enter upon a detail so full of the enormities of corruption; neither shall I, at this time, enter into a speculative examination of the foundation upon which charters stand; because it would lead me into a wider field of enquiry than time will permit. I recommend, however, this subject to your serious enquiry; confident that you must agree with me, that all monopoly is injustice, and political abomination: confident, also, that when you have enquired, you will find that the systems of monopoly and borough-mongering corruption are so intimately entwined together, that it is impossible to remedy the mischiefs of the one without reforming the abuses of the other. Twin plants from one common root of political depravity, they must flourish or must fall together. And if flourish much longer they unfortunately should—farewell to all the blossoms and herbage of human comfort, for like the Upas of Java, the blighting dews shed from their noxious branches spread desolation and sterility throughout the land.

Having thus shewn the interest which ministers and opulent money-dealers have in promoting the system of war, I shall proceed, in the next Lecture, to shew the horrors of the system itself, and the miseries it brings upon the great body of the people.

## THE TRIBUNE, No. XXXVI.

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*A further enquiry into the CALAMITIES produced by the SYSTEM of USURPATION and CORRUPTION. Lecture the Fourth. Containing the First Part of the PICTURE of the HORRORS OF WAR. Delivered Friday, October 16th, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

IF there be a truth more clear than all others, it is this, that the whole human race has but one common interest: namely the promotion of the general welfare. Without entering into any profound speculation relative to the views and objects of human existence, one need but be told to feel, with irresistible force, that the chief and proper pursuit of every human being is happiness; and that, as it constitutes true and genuine *wisdom* in the *individual*, to pursue this happiness with the utmost prudence and discernment, so is it a degree of *virtue* equally great to pursue, with equal solicitude, the general happiness and welfare of the human species: the particular and the general duty differing only in this, that what is *mere prudence*, when applied to the individual, becomes *godlike virtue* when applied in so large and liberal a way as to enfold the whole universe in one large embrace. If this be, as I believe it is, a position which no sophistry can overthrow—which no details of garbled and misrepresented facts can possibly counterbalance in the scale of reason, then have we much occasion to be astonished at the general conduct and language of the human race. When we hear men talking of *natural enemies*, of nations whose local situation renders them hostile to our happiness, and whose throats it is therefore a duty to subject to the butchering edge of war, we ought, surely, to use a little reflection, before we suffer ourselves to be infuriated with a baneful enthusiasm hostile alike to ourselves and our neighbours! Surely it is worth while to enquire whether, in reality, instead of natural enemies all the *people* of all the different nations under the sun be not upon the general plan and interests of nature, the proper and necessary friends of each other? Ought they not to be



linked together—and would they not, if they were wise, be so linked in one common league of amity and protection for the promotion of their mutual happiness and welfare, and the reciprocal supply of their different wants and imperfections? Would not, by such reciprocation, each individual be able to reap a larger harvest of felicity than can possibly be in the power and enjoyment of that selfish being, who labours single-handed for himself, and not regarding others, by others is not regarded. Nay, would not the advantage of such reciprocation be greater than the most successful oppressor ever reaped by his oppression, even supposing that his breast could be always callous to the sufferings of the oppressed.

To pursue this general happiness one would suppose, *a priori*, must be the general wish and universal desire of mankind: and, perhaps, to pursue it, is a desire which never was eradicated entirely from the human breast. But there are, unfortunately, delusions which frequently pervert the human judgment, and prevent us from pursuing with consistency, the most obvious maxims of wisdom and interest. Else, who so dull as not to perceive that this general happiness can only be promoted by a system of amity and peace? Are not that plenty, that security, that intellectual expansion and felicity which can never be expected to be found but in the lap of peace, advantages so considerable that one must blush to think that any human being should be so blind as not to perceive how excellent a thing it must be to direct the faculties of the human race towards the security, instead of the violation, of these enjoyments.

But alas, Citizens, in this respect, undoubtedly, speculative reason and practical knowledge stand in opposition to each other: that is to say, the machinations of an interested few have generally driven mankind into a course directly opposite from that which unclouded and disinterested reason would have dictated. Instead of peace being universally courted by the human soul, the history of the universe is one continued narrative of ferocity and carnage—of struggles of ambition, strife, hatred, fury and desolation—from the contemplation of which reason recoils, and human nature shrinks with instinctive horror. In short, though there is no calamity which can possibly be conceived, no degree of misery to which the human being can be subjected that is not necessarily produced by this system of war,—yet war! war! war! has been the eternal order of the day ever since man has had a hand to uplift in slaughter, or to record in words or symbols the history of  
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of his malignant frenzy. By this the child is robbed of the parent who should have guided him to manhood through the paths of virtue, and have instilled the principles of truth and justice. By this the wife is robbed of the hope and comfort of her heart—is doomed in early youth to widowhood and fruitless lamentation; and that beauty which should have gladdened the manly soul of a worthy and profitable member of society, is consumed, at the silent tomb, in tears and anguish, to the neglect, perhaps, of those infants whose orphan eyes look up to her for protection, and are answered only with wailings of despair and shrieks of horror.—O “child of misery baptized in tears!” what is thy future prospect of atonement?—What is the inheritance purchased by a father’s blood?—Cheerless calamity and rayless ignorance!—Life without hope!—a world without a friend!

By this system of war, also, the aged parent, whose white locks should command our reverence, whose enfeebled joints worn out, perhaps, in promoting the best interests of his fellow beings, furnish, one would suppose, irresistible appeals, not to the *compassion*, but to the *justice* of mankind—that justice which ought to prevent the possibility of a being thus worn out in useful labour, draining the last bitter dregs of life amidst the aggravated calamities of famine, and the privation of every hope and comfort!—By this system of war he is robbed of the assistance of that useful arm which returned, with kindred justice, that assistance imparted in the years of helpless infancy. Robbed of this prop he droops neglected and forlorn: and spite of the ostentatious charity of the country, residences are no longer to be found capacious enough to give shelter to all the hoary heads exposed, in the last feeble extremities of disease, “to bear the pelting of the pitiless storm!”

By this, arts are destroyed, manufactures languish, the improvements of human intellect are suspended, and every virtuous energy of the human mind is rooted up, to plant in the place of those powers and accomplishments which dignify the human character, a dark and savage enthusiasm, a lust of blood more ferocious than that of the tyger, and more intractable than that of the Hyæna. The beast of prey pants not to tear the quivering limbs of his victim except when stung by hunger’s raving pangs, But the tool of ministerial or royal ambition destroys for sport, and gazettes and proclamations trumpet forth these multiplied deeds of infamy, call them glory, and gild them with the claims of *virtue*, because they are too



enormous to be classed under any description of vice for which human invention has been able to find a name.

Let us reflect—O my fellow citizens! parts of my existence! portions of that animated frame of nature, of which every one who thinks himself an individual *whole* is a blasphemer!—Ye dear compatriots! limbs, nerves, and portions of this great system of intelligence and sensation! reflect awhile—Call home your scattered thoughts and distracted passions. Let sympathy and meditation banish for awhile those sordid cares and sensual dissipations that enslave us, and let reason stand arbiter, while I exhibit to you imperfect pictures of WHAT MAN IS, and WHAT MAN MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

Picture to yourselves the desolated scene which every corner of the universe presents: fields drenched in gore—towns depopulated and cities laid waste—harvests trampled down and villages deserted! sterility (even in the happiest and securest regions claiming, half partnership with culture) and penury and wretchedness drinking the vital spirits of two thirds, at least, of the human race. Such is the rude outline of the present picture!—Such are the fruits of glory and of war. But think awhile—think what might have been the condition of mankind, if this desolating system had never been adopted—if peaceful arts had been cultivated with half the diligence devoted to those of war:—if the improvement of a grateful soil, if the extension of useful arts had employed our constant attention, and the expansion of that mind, which is, in reality, the true and only existence of man:—for without mind what were we but useless effigies, less durable and therefore less valuable than the Parian bust or statue which exhibits the fabled form of some Grecian deity? If all the energies were thus employed in promoting the happiness of the human race that have been employed for its destruction, nay, if all the resources that have been exhausted in reducing Europe to a state of famine and depopulation, had been expended in cultivating the earth, in turning barren heaths, and winnowing sands into fields of fertility and cultivation, (and desert sands themselves will yield to human culture, nor is the spot to be found, on the whole surface of the globe, so really barren that human labour and ingenuity cannot make it productive!) how might these resources have transformed this wilderness of a world we inhabit, in which scarcely one fourth is yet tolerably cultivated, into an Eden of felicity! How might joy and fertility have smiled around us! How might population have increased

increased and multiplied, while famine and penury should have been words to be met with only in the fabling pages of a romance, like Giant and Incubus in ancient legends, which amaze our imaginations without alarming our credulity. Let us consider what smiling prosperity might have been disseminated to every individual; while perhaps the toil of an hour or two per day, a mere recreation of healthful exercise, had been all that, at this time, would have been requisite to be endured by any individual in the pursuits necessary for his subsistence. So might the other portions of the day be devoted to the improvements of intellect: while our surly passions (the children of this martial system) being exterminated from our breasts, and our minds no longer being harassed with the tormenting cares and anxieties by which we now are doomed to earn a scanty sustenance for ourselves and our families, an incalculable longevity might have been added to our other innumerable blessings; and we might no more have considered as fables all that has been told us of the protracted youth, and lengthened span of existence ascribed to the golden æra.

Citizens, is this picture, think ye, a mere flight of imagination? Have I drawn a scene of fabled felicity, which no human wisdom, no human virtue, no human powers of intellect could have realized? If you think so, I will tell you how you may be convinced of your error: Turn over the pages of history, and read the catalogues of murders with which dignified heroes and titled conquerors have blotted the annals of the human race. Think of the monstrous devastations which have spread their fame! Think how many fertile fields have been laid waste; how many villages have been destroyed, how many millions have fallen victims to the famine and pestilence bred by the warlike system! Recollect also what a tendency there is in the human constitution to increase in population, to spread wider and wider the circle of civilization, and to multiply the arts and improvements of life. Consider also, how very large a portion of human labour, nay, of the human race is at this time consumed by the luxuries and vices of those orders of society by whose ambition the system of war is promoted; calculate likewise the immense sums that are annually, monthly, nay daily and hourly expended in mad and absurd crusades to destroy the opinions, to root out the faith, or to exterminate the liberties of mankind; and then I believe you will be convinced at once, that what now appears but a fabulous creation of the heated brain



brain might have been the real condition of the universe, if this system of war had not checked the growth of intellect and virtue, and blighted the hopeful buds of human improveability.

Well then, Citizens, what are we to conclude from this? are we to conclude that neighbouring countries are the *natural enemies* of each other, that is to say, that from the very constitution of nature, they have a necessary interest in destroying one another? or that ambitious rulers, sanguinary heroes, and rapacious war-ministers are the only *natural*, or to speak more properly, the unnatural enemies of their respective countries? The fact is, that the man who is, in reality, the enemy of *any country* is thereby an enemy to *all*. He may talk of his *hatred to Frenchmen*, of his *hatred to Republicans*, of his *hatred to Infidels*! but if he hate any thing that bears the shape and stamp of humanity, he is the enemy of the whole human race; and as such ought to be considered, in a more serious point of view than the tyger and the hyena, to whose ferocious appetites I have already alluded.

How comes it then that nationality has so long abused our understandings? how came it that at one period of our history we were in the habit of calling every man a *Frenchman* that was not an *Englishman*, and considering every man whom we called a *Frenchman* as an enemy or a wild beast? How comes it that we are still instructed to consider every *Frenchman* as the *natural enemy* of this country, unless he be the avowed supporter of the most abominable despotism that ever disturbed the tranquillity of the world?

*Natural Enemies!!!*—Citizens, I know not hardly what sort of construction to put upon these fanciful syllables—these superstitious denominations—this cabalistic jargon!—I will not talk of ideas: the purposes of tyranny and superstition are best served by making use of words that have no ideas annexed to them: and therefore it is that this unmeaning cant—this contradictory nothingness—this mystical nonsense has been invented.

What is this *nature*? Tell me ye sophists, ye who first abuse our ears, that you may afterwards abuse our understandings, and then, by way of climax, deprive us of our rights and our existence! tell me, I say, ye juggling sophists, what do you mean by *nature*? Do you mean to create a fourth deity to add to to your *Trinity*? Do you mean to represent to us, under the denomination of nature, some undescribable divinity whose laws you pretend to propound, though  
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you pretend not to know the volume in which they are written? If this be the sort of meaning, or no meaning, which you affix to the word nature, I confess you come forward with a logic so subtle that I cannot *answer* you—because I cannot *comprehend* you. But if, by *nature* you mean the deductions and calculations drawn from the harmonized system of the universe—the laws of general interest deducible from what I call nature, that is to say, the phenomena of the world, then do I say that *natural enmity* is nothing more than a contemptible and unintelligible affectation of speech, a false metaphor, in which the epithet and the substantive are at war, and destroy each other. Nature is the whole; and the law of nature (if we admit such language) must be laid for the good of the whole.

Now enmity is the hostility of parts; and it can never be for the good of the whole that the parts should be tearing each other to pieces; it never can accord with nature, that is with the system of general happiness by which the welfare of all nature is to be promoted, that enmity should subsist at all—or in other words, that the right hand should struggle to destroy the left. How comes it then, that we have been so long abused with this cant about natural enmity? how comes it Citizens? It comes from this—A few artful individuals, who have more understanding than honesty, and more cunning than either, have grasped to themselves a degree of power and influence which gives them an apparent interest diametrically opposite to the happiness of the great body of mankind. Their interest is to monopolize to themselves as much as they can. How is it to be done? No individual arm is strong enough to grasp nine-tenths of the produce of every man's industry. For the ferocious ruffian who should attempt such pillage by his single authority, we should find a title that would doom him to the punishment of the gibbet. Some sort of system was necessary therefore, by which these cunning plunderers could make that which is in itself so infamous apparently honourable to themselves, and glorious to those whom they could make the instruments of their rapacity. Hence came the sounding words *glory, renown, patriotism, the honour of our country, the field of triumph, the laurel of victory*, and all the fine phrases which are in reality but so many splendid veils thrown over the hideous features of rapine and murder to conceal from the world at large the fiend-like horrors of their distorted countenances.

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The late King of *Prussia*, to whom the world has undoubtedly several obligations, has, among other services, been very forward in stripping off the veil which used to cover the sanctuary of the Cabinet. It is very true, that this great hero of the modern world, did not mean that all mankind should reap the benefit of his labours. Generally speaking, he wrote only for the illustrious few—a favourite courtier, or a nephew, or perhaps a *favourite of a worse description!* But somehow or other it happened that those instructions, meant only for the use of cabinet ministers, and embryo monarchs, have found a way first from ministers of state to their secretaries, and then from their secretaries to their clerks, and from the clerks of these secretaries to the humble dependents upon the clerks of the clerks of the secretaries: and hence, somehow or other, these works have got occasionally abroad, and tumbled into the hands—I should say the *troughs* of the swinish multitude.

Now one of these books, written for the use of the Prince Royal, now King of Prussia, is at this time concealed within the traitorous walls of No. 2. Beaufort's Buildings: a friend was kind enough to lend me a copy, as I understand, of an edition, of which only four copies have been printed in the English language, by that lover of literary curiosities, the late Lord *North*. This book certainly contains some curious facts, sentiments and manners, and among the rest a definition of *politics*, which ought to have accompanied those fine sounding words glory, patriotism, and the like already mentioned. This monarch seems to have understood, or to have thought that he understood what politics were as well as most people, and he tells us that a variety of words have been invented for the purpose of glossing certain actions that were rather too gross to be mentioned in plain language. Thus, for example, he tells us, that cheating, villainy, and plunder, are terms so dishonourable, and actions so base, that no man will patiently bear that they should be applied to him: and therefore, says he, the term *politics* has been invented, which is only a courtly phrase to describe those qualifications with less grossness.

I should be very sorry to repeat the observation with which he follows up this definition; but considering that I have royal authority for it, and knowing that we ought always to bow down with implicit veneration to every thing bearing the stamp of royalty, I will give it you.

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This word, says he, was chiefly invented in compliment to us, who are kings; it not being very decent to call us scoundrels and rascals.—Dropping, therefore these offensive words, I shall observe, that the system of politics, has undergone many *revolutions*: for in defiance of all the sublime and beautiful logic of *Burke*, and all the subtle metaphysics of *Windham*, so long as the world exists revolutions will be going on, and neither nations nor words, nor systems of philosophy, nor women's caps, can escape them.—What is the universe but a scene of eternal revolution? What is fire to-day, may be earth to-morrow; and what is earth to-day may to-morrow mount in the element of fire, which in the revolutions of matter shall spread into air, condense into vapour, fall in some shower, or flow in some fertilizing stream to feed the freshening verdure of the field; that grass eaten by some ox or cow may be transformed into a beef-stake, and the next stage in this eternal revolution may metamorphose it into the muscle, or perhaps into the tongue of a political lecturer.

Citizens, not only in the physical, but in the mental universe is this phenomenon to be observed: In fact our minds are in a continual state of fluctuation and change—or in plain and simple language, of *revolution*: and every man who can accuse himself of the *crime* of thought will lay his hand upon his breast and confess that he remembers many strange revolutions that have taken place in his own mind. There are but two sorts of beings who will deny this—those who think that their subtilities and politic artifices can be promoted by the pretence of infallible consistency, and those who are too stupid to have any thoughts at all. Among these revolutions then of the intellectual world, have been many of considerable consequence in the system of ambition or politics. Ambition is indeed the original word. *Alexander the Great* is, I believe, one of those kings in favour of whom the word politics was never invented. Thus, then, the ambition, or politics of rulers, of whatever denomination, has differed very considerably in different periods, and parts of the world.

*Alexander the Great* thought that all glory, honour and ambition, consisted in being always either at the head of an army, or getting drunk after victory among his courtezans; his fame is founded upon destroying the human race in person, with more avidity than any other ruffian of his time.—



The ambition of another great monarch, Darius of Persia, was of a more politic kind. He gratified his kingly lust of fame, by sitting in security in his own palace, amassing together the wealth of his plundered subjects, and enjoying the luxuries of the earth.

This rapacious spirit of grandeur, however, never acquired so much reputation amongst mankind, as the glorious pursuits of murder and desolation; and therefore it is that the histories, poems, and romances of every description which are put into the hands of youth for the purpose of debauching their understandings, and corrupting their hearts, always display the ravages of Cæsars and Alexanders, in all the glorious colours that inspire enthusiasm, and incite the destructive desire of imitating their crimes.

That such dispositions are frequently implanted by the perusal of such books I myself can witness. I remember, in consequence of the history of *Alexander* falling into my hands while I was very young, being deeply stricken with that detestable lust of murder and devastation, called heroic fame: and if fortunate circumstances had not turned my attention to the fine arts, and thence to literary study, these sanguinary sentiments might have urged me at this moment, perhaps, through scenes of cruel carnage and desolation, to seize the blood-stained prize, and crown my brows with widows' curses, and with orphans' tears!

These poems, and these histories, and still more the venal train hired to pour the poison of adulation into the royal ear, age after age perpetuated this martial enthusiasm, with some variations, however, in the particular colouring. At one time the rage was only for conquering kingdoms, and then giving them away again; in order to show the perfect disinterestedness with which your great heroes cut the throats of their fellow beings. In other instances plunder was the sole object, and the throats of men were only cut that the conquerors might plunder their houses, sell their children and domestic slaves, and expose their wives and daughters to violation.

By and by the lust of extended dominion seized the human character, and instead of temporary plunder, a regular system of pillage, that is to say, of tribute, subsidies, and annual contributions, proclaimed and rewarded the prowess of the conqueror. To this succeeded the system of the *Barbarians*, as they are called, who overthrew the *Roman empire*—and  
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who fought not only for fame, for plunder, and for conquest, but for a home. They brought their wives and children in their train, and where they conquered they settled; seizing at the same time, the property, the possessions, the persons of the vanquished.

Of this system, these Barbarians, if they could have read, might have found an example in Holy Writ. They did pretty well, however, without the example; and we find that the system of ambition of these *Goths*, *Huns*, and *Vandals*, Barbarians as they were, was rather more rational than any of those that preceded. The savages who inhabited sterile countries, and whose climate was severe and comfortless, burst like a torrent upon the fields and vineyards of more genial climes, and more cultivated nations, in which their families might be sustained by moderate industry, and instead of wandering from place to place might enjoy the sweets of a settled habitation, and the comforts and luxuries matured by a warmer sun.

Ambition next assumed another character, more soothing to the youthful senses, and which cannot fail of enchanting, even now, the imagination; nay, some imaginations can be youthful even amidst the frost of sixty; and Burke, while numbering the white hairs that have not yet fallen from his brow, can talk of the age of chivalry like a boy of twenty; or armed cap-a-pee by fanatical prejudices, not with lance in wrist, but pen in hand, can mistake windmills for giants, and paragons of licentious depravity for stars of glory—"full of light, and splendor, and love."

This age of chivalry had a tincture of the most despicable superstition—a superstition which—"worshipped a cruel and revengeful Being, and drew him always with his thunder round him, and ripe for the destruction of mankind!" a superstition which supposed, the way to merit the eternal rewards of Paradise, was to plunge the sabre into the bosom of every being who dared to suppose that the joys of Paradise, instead of being derived from playing on the harp, and singing eternal hallelujahs, consisted in sporting with black-eyed damsels under bowers of amaranths and roses.

It must be confessed, however, that this spirit of chivalry tended much to awaken the energies of the human mind, and though at first these energies were ill applied, let but the



mind be properly roused, and all will ultimately go well.— Though you may blunder a while in the intricate paths of error you will break your way through at last; and the temple of truth and happiness will be discovered. This discovery once made, the enthusiasm which once misled, will become the great guide of liberty, happiness and justice.

To chivalry also we are indebted for some obligations which the heart of man will not readily forget. It emancipated the female sex from the degraded state in which they had too long been held; and thus ultimately redeemed half of human intellect from that oblivion in which, to the injury of the whole it had been lost. But though there were particular characteristics in this species of ambition, not equally detestable with the others, the radical vices were the same in all. They were only so many different shapes in which the artful few contrived to make the deluded multitude the tools of their monopoly and usurpation.

“ But the age of chivalry is gone,” says the oracle of St. Omer’s, “ that of sophisters, œconomists and calculators has succeeded.” It is a little strange, methinks, that the moon-struck supporter of the most infamous system of calculation that ever existed, should be the first to pronounce so flaming a philippic against this system. Yes! the age of calculation has succeeded to the age of chivalry. Pounds, shillings, and pence are dearer to the corrupt minister of a corrupted country, than the happiness and existence of his fellow beings. In the safe retreat of the cabinet, instead of the dangers of a camp, the modern votary of ambition decides by algebraical figures, and the cold propositions of arithmetic, upon the destruction of one portion of the universe, the depopulation of a second, and the famine, slavery, and misery of a third. Yes! the age of calculation has succeeded. Human passions, or human happiness, are no longer worthy the study of the politician. It is vain to think of what would be productive of human happiness—it is vain to think how the prosperity of millions can be advanced; a better system of calculation, more important to the state, occupies all the meditations of the statesman, namely, how he should be enabled, by continuing the war for another campaign, to have a pretence for borrowing 20 or 30 millions more, to be spent in contracts and patronage, for which he is to pawn us and our posterity for ever; but by which he is not only to have the advantage of gratifying all his commercial friends, whose claret, champaign, and burgundy he drinks at their *loyal* banquets, with fresh loans, dou-  
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ceurs, bonuses, and lotteries, by which he is to plunge the people into still greater ignorance and debauchery. Aye, aye—Let the monied men have the profits of lotteries, and let the labourer and mechanic be debauched by such expedients; for if once the common people become as moral as reformers wish them to be, the farce is at an end, down drops the curtain, the gaudy puppets of corruption play their antics to themselves, and the people pay no longer for such diversions. Nor does the calculation terminate here. Your modern statesman can demonstrate, by any of the rules of arithmetic, how much is to be derived to himself by all the patronage of armies—navies—contracts—commissions, &c. how much is to be disseminated and ramified through 100,000 different channels to enable him to delude and mislead such a portion of the people, and to influence so many virtuous and independent members of a certain honourable house, which shall be nameless, as may render his domination as permanent, at least, as the system under which that domination is supported.

There was once, Citizens, some foundation, at least, for supposing that the men who formed ambitious projects had some principle of honor and honesty about them—the man who risks his own life, confronts every danger, and shares every hardship—who, though decorated with pompous titles, wraps himself up in the same coarse rug with his fellow soldiers, and throws himself upon the same hard ground, under the common canopy of heaven, leads one to suppose that an honest, though blind enthusiasm, and not a base and sordid selfishness, is the source of his error. But the sneaking, cold hearted calculator who, in the security of the cabinet, adjusts the average price of human blood, and plans campaigns in which famine and devastation are to ravage whole continents, or who issues, amidst the excesses of a luxurious table, his savage orders for the devastation of one portion of the world, and the starving of another, excites something so like contempt in our breasts, at the same time that he provokes our indignation, that it requires every exertion of philosophy to avoid that absolute detestation which one would wish never to entertain against any individual whatever. He who thus devotes to destruction those whose hardships he has not the intrepidity to share, has not even the excuses of the hero. The latter is an open highwayman who risks his life in his *vocation*, while the other is like a dark assassin, who gets behind a hedge, or a wall, to shoot you as you pass, and possess himself of the pillage in safety.

Such,



Such, Citizens, is the history of the revolutions of ambition—the faithful description of the different stages through which glory has passed during her career on earth. But in the midst of this variety there is one common principle to be found—namely, the aggrandizement of a few individuals, and the monopoly of that which ought to be participated in freedom and happiness by the whole: in other words, the desire of reaping not only the profit of their own particular talents and faculties, but of monopolizing all the advantages of the talents and faculties of others.

Shall I descend to further particulars? Shall I shew you the monstrous depravities of heart into which mankind have frequently been led by this selfish and detestable ambition? Shall I call to your minds how the human character has frequently blackened from crime to crime—that from open murderers we have become assassins; that from assassination we have proceeded to mix the poisonous drug in the bowl of pleasure; and how, at last, in the grand climax of human wickedness, conspiracies have been formed to starve whole nations in order to eradicate principles which threaten the world with regeneration, and monopolizing tyrants with the overthrow of that power they have so long abused. O system of horrors! what words shall paint thy detestable enormities?—It is not enough that mankind are to fall under the edge of the sword—it is not enough that the diseases of a camp are to help forward the business of destruction—the gold of one country wrung from the excessive industry of its population, is to be sent to adjoining countries to purchase insurrection—to sow the seeds of treachery—to perpetuate the reign of infamy and intrigue, and to aggravate factions to increasing rage, that the crimes thus purchased by our bribery and corruption may be urged, by the very purchasers, as reasons against the adoption of those principles, which this base system of corruption is carried on to overthrow! Even this is not enough—the climax is yet to come. Britain was once supposed to have an open and generous character; and the basest and most abandoned individual, whom the vices and corruptions of the great had robbed almost of the form of humanity, if he bore the name of Briton, disdained to strike a prostrate enemy, or to repeat the blow when his antagonist lay bleeding at his feet. But this trait which still marks the individual—for it is curious to observe how long the human character will sometimes resist the vicious influence of its government!—This trait, which still remains deeply rooted in the heart of the individual, is,  
alas,

alas, exterminated from the national character.—Not having the open, manly courage—for who has open, manly courage when engaged in a bad cause?—not having the open, manly courage to meet a people fairly in the field, who are struggling for that dearest, best, and only boon of life, *liberty*!—the vital spring of human existence!—not having this courage, and knowing that our gallant soldiers turn with abhorrence from such an unnatural struggle, base arts have been used—a vile conspiracy, whose magnitude alone conceals its horrid infamy, is entered into *to starve 24 millions of human beings!!!—starve 24 millions!* Canst thou stop here, Corruption? If base designing malice could execute a scheme so damnable! can savage policy expect to draw the line, and say thus far shall the devastation go, but it shall proceed no farther? Canst thou, wild framer of a plan so hateful! be mad enough to hope that the dreadful consequences would not spread even to that people whom thou hast made unwitting instruments of such wickedness? Couldst thou suppose that *France* could be starved and destroyed, and Britain not sink into the same vortex? If thou couldst it is plain proof, indeed, that your calculations extended no further than the rule of three!—that thou art ignorant of the physical as well as the moral laws of that universe to which thou art a shame, and thy exaltation is a disgrace. Nay, thy ignorance stops not there. Didst thou but even know the springs of commerce—that darling system which plunders the universe for revenue to distribute among thy dirty parasites and base supporters—didst thou but understand even the spirit of commerce, thou wouldest perceive that it is impossible to starve one country, without bringing famine upon every country that approximates. The merchant is no respecter of these distinctions—tell not me of the merchant of this country, or the merchant of the other—He has no country—Interest is his native land—gold is the vital spring of the commercial constitution; and his attachments are determined, not by a line upon the map, but by a piece of scribbled paper; and the particular chamber of his best affections is frequently designated by a black patch, with a white scrawl in it, at the corner. This is the country of the merchant. Wherever, therefore, he can get the largest profit; be it in the land of friend or the land of foe, there he will take his commodity. Thus when you starve a neighbouring country, the stores that should feed your own people will, somehow or other, find the way into that country; because a better price can be made of them there than at home. This is not all.

You



You throw the torch of destruction into the granary where the fruits of human industry are hoarded, and burn it: or perchance it is floating in some vessel; and least it should fall into the hands of the enemy, you scuttle it, and it is sunk to the bottom of the ocean.

Is it your enemy's bosom only that you gall by this conduct? Are you ignorant that every grain of wheat, of which you rob your enemy must inevitably rob yourself half a grain? Are you ignorant that it is better for your enemy to take those necessary articles than that they should be thus destroyed? Do you not know, that it is even better for your enemies to be in abundance, while you are in want, than to share the famine with you? because, in the former instance, all other countries will pour their supplies into your market: but, if your enemy share the distress, your market can be only half supplied; for they have the same *mercantile* temptation to hold out as you have. You cannot fetter the spirit, though you may debauch the soul of commerce. You cannot cut its wings.—It will fly through the air, scud under the waves, elude your policy, and find itself a *mart*. Nor does it stop even here. Could you monopolize all the granaries of the universe; could you make yourselves abound in this *honest* wealth—(honest wealth dishonestly obtained) what would be the consequence? Is there no effect produced by famine, but famine itself? Is not the concomitant of want contagious disease? and do you not know that, even within the walls of this city, during the last winter, hundreds of human beings fell a prey to the contagious diseases which the want of a sufficient quantity of the necessities of life produced? Well, then, suppose your fine golden dream of the misery, and ruin and desolation of France—of famine stalking through every street, with shrieks, and groans, and madness in her train, blasting their fields and vineyards, sweeping down their villages, and depopulating their cities—What then?—Contagion would have followed, and that contagion, in all human probability, must have seized upon the vitals of the country inflicting this barbarous punishment: for punishment, it seems, is now to be the reward of virtuous principles and exertions.

These projects, however, have been disappointed. *France* will not be starved; France will not be beaten down. The prostituted leaders of the rebellious sections, purchased with the gold of coalesced cabinets,—those leaders, at heart, I believe, corrupt and intriguing royalists, making use of deluded republicans

republicans as the instruments of their base designs, may rise, in ill-timed insurrection, against the usurping Convention (also, perhaps, in some of its parts, corrupted by the same means) and thus by an ill-timed struggle, may postpone a while the glorious triumph of liberty; but it will be but for a while. Even now, conquest, fame and glory, spread their golden wings over the cause of liberty, truth, and justice! They must triumph: the expiring pangs and struggles of despotism, superstition, and falsehood, may be many and severe, and their last agonies may produce occasional efforts of strength and energy: but, if I mistake not, the doom is sealed; Truth must prevail; and the invincible arm of Virtue shall beat down the systems of corruption that have so long been desolating the universe, and destroying the vital happiness of mankind.

*France* has at last weathered the storm of famine. Take from your American merchants an account of their present expectations in this respect. They will tell you, that in the French markets, they cannot even get, at this time, for large cargoes, a greater price than the corn was bought up for in America; and therefore, knowing how wise and excellent an administration they have to deal with in this country, they very prudently throw their cargoes, every now and then, in the way of the *British* cruisers; in order that they may have the happiness of being taken, and brought safe into an English port; where, be their cargoes what they will—be they eatable or be they not—be they fit for one swinish multitude, or even unfit for another, a good sound price will be paid with all expences of freightage, and 10 per cent. profits to the adventurous owner, as a reward and compensation for the misfortune he has met with in not being able to reach his destined port.

But do not suppose, Citizens, that the *American* is the only man wise enough to have learned the benefit of being captured. A very little while ago, I received the particulars of an act of decency practised by a *Dutch* upon the English coast. This *Dutch* dealer that his corn would not have so good a market in *France*, as he imagined when he shipped it, cruised off one of our ports, till he meets an American vessel. "How came you here?" says the American, "you will be taken." "Why that is the very thing I want," says the *Dutch*. "Is that so?" says the American; "then I will take care that you shall not waste it." Away goes the American



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But do not suppose, Citizens, that the *American* is the only man wise enough to have learned the benefit of being captured. A very little while ago, I received the particulars of an act of dexterity practised by a *Dane* upon the English coasts. This *Dane* finding that his corn would not have so good a market in *France*, as he imagined when he shipped it, cruises off one of our ports, till he meets an American vessel. "how came you here?" says the American, "you will be taken." Why that is the very thing I want," says the *Dane*. "Is it so," says the American; "then I will take care that you shall not want it." Away goes the American



and gives information that a Danish vessel is cruising in the neighbourhood, loaded with corn for *France*. Out whips the revenue cutter; and the willing captive is brought into port, where he gets 10 per cent. upon his goods, and all expences of freightage.

Thus ends, then, the project of starving France; and whenever any country has an individual in it, that is base enough to form the project of starving another country, and when that country is so lost to humanity, as to suffer a minister to attempt to execute such projects, may the aim be disappointed, and may the catastrophe (with respect to the country threatened) be the same as in this instance! O that I could rationally add—may that offending country however escape the punishment it deserves.

But it is in vain, it is absurd to wish for contradictions: and the country that dares be base and profligate, enough to uplift the arm of violence against the principles of truth, liberty, and justice, must take the consequence:—for sufferance is only to be avoided by virtuous principle; and he who departs from principle must receive the dreadful punishment which belongs to unprincipled conduct!

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XXXVII.

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*A further Enquiry into the CALAMITIES produced by the SYSTEM of USURPATION and CORRUPTION. Lecture the FIFTH.—Containing the Second Part of the PICTURE of the HORRORS of WAR. Delivered Wednesday Oct. 21, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

WHEN I consider the magnitude and importance of my subject—when I recollect what a monstrous association of horrors and miseries has, from generation to generation, been introduced among mankind by the devouring system of military ambition: I blush to recollect how faint a picture I have been able to present you. I have touched, it is true, upon some of the private calamities which come home, in many, many, melancholy instances, to every man's business and bosom; I have endeavoured to awaken your sympathy for the widowed wife, the orphan infant, and the helpless parent, robbed in his declining years of the prop and stay of his age, and left to all the anxieties of paternal fondness, and the miseries of surrounding penury. I have endeavoured to describe to you some part (small part indeed, have I been able to describe) of the miseries which through every department of society, through every connection dear to the heart of man, must inevitably be produced, and has so long been produced by this mad system to which we are devoted by our rulers. But, Citizens, when I review this picture, I find that I have touched only, in feeble shades, some of the less-important groups; but that the most interesting figures still lie hid in the great mass and body of calamity; and that the features of horror, misery, and desolation, which constitute the gigantic enormities of the Monster, War, have scarcely been presented, even in outline to your imagination.

No. XXXVII.

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How



How shall I treat this subject with the weight and gravity it deserves? How shall I conjure up to your imaginations the thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands of human beings (possessed of the same capabilities of pleasure and pain as ourselves) who are doomed by these mad pursuits, to quit every endearment of life, to renounce every pleasing, every useful, every ornamental art, and march, in trim and gaudy array, to the field of inevitable desolation, where miracle after miracle must work in their behalf if one-fifth part of them return alive to their country, even with maimed and mutilated limbs, sad trophies of the triumphs (perhaps of the disgraces) of their country!

The imagination of Homer has rioted in all varieties of torment and misery to describe and decorate, with the charms of versification, the varied wounds by which the life of the human being may be destroyed; but where is the power of language that shall describe the smart and anguish of those wounds, the continued torture, the grinding misery of the poor wretch writhing upon the ground, amidst thousands of his dead and dying companions. How shall imagination picture the sufferings of this throng of miserable victims, weltering in blood, trodden beneath the hoofs of horses, and then perhaps left to languish in the field, exposed to the pitiless bleak air, night after night, day after day—no gentle hand to pour the healing unction in the wound, no kind commiserating friend to soothe the last hours of departing existence, and close, with kind solicitude, those eyes grown dim by the approach of death.

Oh, Citizens! how shall I conjure up even the faintest images of the innumerable horrors which these poor beings must experience? How shall I awaken in your minds the terrors—the afflicting anguish which must rend the soul of the poor wounded wretch, when, perhaps, some fury, veiled in the semblance of woman's form—some harpy who follows the camp for plunder, sprawls over the field of death, ranging from place, seeking what may be gleaned amidst these horrors, and, with the rugged poinard in her hand, dispatching the miserable wretches, whom the sabres of the enemy had but half destroyed! Such is the cruel and rapacious fury, engendered by this system of war! To so much worse than fiend can it transform the sex, which in its softness and simplicity can melt the most obdurate, and soothe the most ferocious heart!

But

But the field of slaughter exhibits a small, small part of the horrors of war.—This is but a single picture in a gallery, every department of which is filled with scenes of woe and misery unutterable. The hero dying in the conflict of battle, may perhaps soothe and cheer his mind—when fighting in a good cause, at least—which I am sorry, to say, has not always been the case with the English hero!—When he is bravely struggling *to vindicate the liberties of his country, not to destroy the liberties of another*, some consolation, some alleviation may take from his wounds the smarting edge of anguish, and enable him to endure with fortitude and composure the bodily afflictions to which he is subjected. But these are the slightest of the sorrows and hardships he must experience. The midnight march is his, through rain, winds, and storms; all the warfare of inclement seasons—the painful watch by night, where nothing is to be seen to cheer his imagination but scudding clouds, perhaps, and fog-bred meteors, and nothing to be heard but hollow winds, and wolves that prowl for their expected prey. Meanwhile drear desolating solitude cradles his fancy in its bed of thorns, and fills his bewildered mind with painful recollections of friends and relations, whom, perhaps, he is to see no more; but whose remembered fondness, knocking importunately at his lonely breast, force open the doors of nature, and let in regret and keen affliction!—Perhaps the big tear of anguish rolls down his cheek, and he exclaims, with bitter and half-stifled sighs, “What had I to do with your quarrels and your contests? your views of ambition, or your schemes of national aggrandisement? why—why should the infants to whom I have given life, expire beneath the gripe of *pretended charity*, immured within the walls of a dungeon, called a workhouse, and eating the bitterest bread of vile dependence? Why should the loved object of my affections lose a husband in the prime of youth, and I the endearments which that loved object was wont to afford me, that here, beneath this sable canopy, where not one object presents itself but what reminds me of increasing dangers and difficulties, I may repeat my painful vigils, while shivering anguish creeps through every joint, and the denunciation of death hangs over my head if I dare to seek for necessary shelter, or taste in the embraces of sleep the sweet forgetfulness of that anguish to which I am doomed?”



But not the midnight watch, not the weary march, not the dreadful scene of conflict and of death constitute the only scourges of the military life. Famine, meagre famine, stares in the faces of the harrassed host upon every new disaster.—Unwholesome food, and the consequences of heaps of men, and animals of all descriptions, being shut up within the narrow confines of a camp, or perhaps within the walls of some besieged town, awake the fiend Contagion from his den, and Pestilence destroys those whom the sword and the fatigues of the campaign might otherwise have spared. Here lingering diseases are incessantly bred—here misery arises in all its shapes, while no opportunities of comfortable alleviation can be afforded, and thousands upon thousands, nay, in process of time, millions upon millions, of our fellow beings sink untimely into the earth—that earth which, were governments wise, and governors virtuous, and were a good system of policy established in the nations of the world, would have been cultivated and improved to tenfold fertility and happiness, by the very hands which are thus mouldering beneath the war-polluted turf.

Still, still melancholy conviction cries out to me that I have done but little, very little towards exhibiting the calamities of war; and that my picture is still coloured with too dead and faint a hand to present to your minds a real representation of the detestable and abhorrent system I am decrying: a system nursed by ambition, fostered by rapacity, and perpetuated to increase the power, patronage, and corruption, of the most venal and most contemptible set of beings that ever cursed the earth with their detestable machinations.

The catalogue of horrors closes not with the mischiefs brought upon those who fall victims to this system. Those who survive these accumulated hardships too frequently return into society like scorpions let loose to sting its bosom—like mental pestilences, spreading vice, licentiousness, and barbarism, in every breast that has the misfortune to come near enough to imbibe the contagion.

I mean not—justice, truth, and humanity forbid! I mean not to throw reproach upon the character of the soldier.—Whatever results from a system in itself reproachful, belongs to the system and to those who are its prime movers; not to the unfortunate beings who are made the reluctant agents of this wickedness, and are themselves the greatest sufferers by  
its

its continuance. I venerate the generous enthusiasm of the man who dare oppose his breast to the poinard of the real enemy of his country! I abhor—I abjure for ever, and deny the claims of manhood to that wretch who, when the real interests of his country call, is not ready to shed his blood in defence of justice, liberty, and truth; and to purchase, even by laying down the price of life, the redemption of his country from slavery, or its security against hostile invasion!

I pity also the unfortunate youth who, robbed, by a profligate war, of that honest profession by which he used to obtain subsistence for himself and family, and oppressed by inhuman task masters, who at once destroy our traffic and double those taxes which the traffic is bound to pay—I pity the poor unhappy youth thus doomed, merely from the want of bread, to enter into the ranks of an army, going to fight in a cause which he himself abhors: and such has been the case, at particular periods of the British history, with a very large majority of those soldiers who have been doomed, at the nod and beck of a minister, to fight against the liberties of the human race.

But though I venerate the patriot hero of the first description, and though I pity the unfortunate victim of the second, yet justice does not permit me to shut my eyes against the light of truth, or to conceal from those who listen to me, the immoral influence of this system of ambition and war upon the human character.

What are the passions that must be generated in a camp? What are the passions that must be generated in the field of battle? We have many vices in our decalogue; we have many hundred thousand crimes (real or supposed) in those huge volumes of contradiction called the “STATUTES AT LARGE;” but which of the vices, mentioned in either the one or the other, can be put in competition with that gloomy ferocity of mind, that inhuman lust of fury and devastation which constitute the *virtue* of a soldier in the field of battle, and must, therefore, become a part of his habitual character. Picture to yourselves the scenes in which these poor unhappy beings are engaged: I remind you again that I am not angry with the individual; he is the instrument, and not the cause. If I am assassinated, indignation is not directed against the dagger which is made the instrument of my destruction, but against the ruffian arm that wielded it: and man becomes, in many cases, only the dagger, or instrument of that political  
arm,



arm, which, strung by ambition, and urged by the rage of avarice and rapacity, destroys the human race and makes one portion of mankind promote the destruction of another.—But, Citizens, when the implement has received its stamp and shape, its uses are, in a great measure determined. The dagger is no implement for domestic convenience, nor the plough-share for havoc and destruction: and when we contemplate the mould in which the soldier has been fashioned, we shall be obliged, I am afraid, to confess that his character must have received a stamp unfavourable to those peaceful virtues which insure the happiness of society. Can he have done otherwise than have imbibed deep traits of fury and licentiousness in consequence of those scenes he has been engaged in? Picture to yourselves an army, a huge association of men who pride themselves in having been the first to set fire to the hay-ricks of the enemy, to throw whole villages into conflagration, to have pillaged and destroyed the whole country through which they marched, and left desolation and dreary solitude “to muse the praise” of their heroic actions! Paint to yourselves—[for I will take no notice of the licentious scenes of a camp. Those lesser vices of profligacy and debauchery, so naturally bred by people being placed in situations where they have no hope of permanent, peaceable, and virtuous enjoyment, I will pass over; for they are trifles in comparison with what I am speaking of. I will speak only of those gloomy and ferocious passions, those dispositions and habits which transform the human being into a fiend, and destroy, in some instances, almost the semblance, as well as the essence of humanity!] Paint to yourselves, then, the ferocity of a battle—think you are transported to those scenes of hostile strife, where some town or fortress is taken by storm—where some city, fiercely besieged, and bravely defended, is at last carried at the point of the bayonet: an expression made use of with such cool indifference by those who recite the history of battles; but which, if you conjure up to your minds the scenes of horror and cruelty that are included in it, would freeze up the blood in your veins, and lead you to wonder at the frenzy of mankind that can thus find honor, glory, and distinction in laying millions of their fellow beings bleeding upon the earth, and then trampling over their dying carcases that they may have a fresh opportunity of wreaking their savage thirst of human gore upon fresh ranks of devoted victims! Think of the scenes which ensue. It is not every fiend, it is true, that like *Suwarrow*—

(a name

(a name that sounds in my ears like the shrieks of murdered babes and matrons!)—It is not every fiend that can, in the present period, glut his inhuman thirst of blood with the indiscriminate massacre of man, woman, and child! It is not every Emperor, or *Empress*, who can issue infernal mandates to spare neither sex nor age. This heroic virtue, I grant, belongs only to one or two of the civilized and orderly governments of Europe. But barring all orders of cruelty like these—barring all purposed, all meditated cruelty, except the meditated cruelty of the first conflict, who yet has found the master key of human passion, so as to be able, on the moment, at the lifting of a flag, or the beating of a drum, to call home the furious and enraged spirits of a triumphant soldiery, compel them to stop in the career of victory, desist from revenge and carnage, and restore at once that humanity to their bosoms which, in the midst of the sanguinary conflict, has been so fiercely banished?—and that too at the very time when the rewards are glaring before their eyes, for which they had encouraged one another, in their songs and convivial hours, and which had formed the watch-word to rouse their enthusiasm and urge them to the field of slaughter! Think, then, of the scenes of pillage—But what is pillage?—It is a detestable thing, it is true, to invade the property of others: but it sinks—it loses all its enormity in comparison of the vices before us—when massacre and rape stalk hand in hand through every street—when the sanctity of every retreat is violated, and the husband, perhaps, falls beneath the assassinating knife, while the loved partner of all his joys and endearments is compelled, by brutal violation, in his very sight, before his expiring eyes, upon the very couch that witnessed the chaste endearments of connubial felicity, to writhe under the grasp of an infuriated monster, half man and half fiend, roused to every detestable passion—But I cannot finish the picture. Imagination must supply what words cannot.

Oh, Citizens, language is not to be found, nor colours to represent the monstrous devastations, cruelties, and inordinate horrors of this system of war, carried on to gratify the ambition of a few, to indulge the private pique of a paltry courtier—perhaps to satisfy the revenge of disappointed appetite: as this country once plunged into a war with *France*, because the favourite, perhaps of the most contemptible species, of one of our profligate kings, had his addresses rejected by the Queen of France as an unfit paramour for her hours of wantonness.

Citi-



Citizens ! Citizens ! If I were now describing to you the conduct of men in the ages of barbarism and ignorance—if the picture only related to antediluvian savages, or even to the ferocious barbarians who burst from the confines of the North, and deluged the Roman Empire, it would not be strange. That savage ferocity should be the concomitant of barbarous ignorance, is what we are led to expect. But we boast of our refinement; we boast of our wisdom; we boast of our progress in the fine arts, which are capable of giving a polish to every enjoyment; we have added “the Corinthian” capital to the pillar of polished society.” How comes it, then, that we still retain those dispositions of Gothic barbarism.

But if we are astonished to find that there is yet any thing remaining of this barbarous system, how must our astonishment be increased when we find that, in proportion as we are growing in what we call refinement, we are also increasing in the frequency, extent, and duration of this savage practice. Nay, it would even appear, from the calculations of statesmen, from the harrangues of pretended politicians, and the declarations of a certain assembly, that all the use of this polishing and refinement, and the improvements in every art and science, was only that they administered to the improvement of the system of war: or, in other words, that all refinement and all science consisted in cutting one another’s throats more expeditiously than savages and barbarians could pretend.

What art, what invention is there that has not been pressed into the service of this inhuman traffic? nay, what art or science is there that does not seem, by courtiers at least, to be prized in proportion as it can be rendered serviceable to the art of war? The Miner delves the earth for metals, and the Chemist toils in his laboratory to produce compositions to enable us to destroy, in an instant, as many of our fellow beings as in the rude and barbarous ages of society would have furnished the havock of half a day. Every profession, every art, mechanical or scientific, is rendered tributary; and year after year, century after century, reign after reign, and administration after administration, the system has been carried on with greater avidity; with increased extravagance and profligacy in the manner of conducting it, and increased frivolity with respect to the pretences for which it has been undertaken.

How comes all this? Citizens, it arises from this circumstance, that government has become a system of juggling and intrigue, and war has become necessary for patronage, and  
revenue

revenue—for the creation of fresh places, pensions, dependencies, agencies, contracts, commissaryships and the like. Hence war has been found the best trade and merchandise that a minister can deal in. Formerly people went to war upon pretences flimsy enough, it is true, but they always had some pretence. The hero had some expectation to enrich his country by plundering his enemies. (It was not then found out that a minister could enrich himself better by plundering his own country!) The Savage supposed that the possession of the banks of a certain river would enable him and his tribe to maintain themselves with more ease and in greater abundance; the hunting tribes had not wood and forest land enough to range in, and, therefore, they lifted the hatchet, and sounded the war-whoop; the Arab also, to this day, repays himself for the fatigues and dangers of his predatory excursions by the booty he brings home to his tents: but under the present system of *civilized* Europe, who is mad and foolish enough to expect, by making war to all eternity, to bring home plunder and pillage enough to repay the loss of blood and treasure (for it seems blood can be paid for as well as treasure) which are expended in the dangerous conflict: nay, so sure are they that these are not the means by which wealth is to be brought into the country, that the *heroes* who plan these wars and crusades, always take care to have no share in the execution of them themselves.

While war was made for plunder, the *captain of the banditti* marched at the head of his plunderers to secure the largest share of the booty; but, at present, those who plan these scenes of plunder and devastation, know they shall have the largest share of the booty by sitting close and snug in the cabinet at home, without knowing anything about the conflict but what they learn from reading a gazette over their coffee, or their bottle. In some country or another of Europe, perhaps at this very time, two beings, who are never sober, and who carry a pipe of Tokay in their noses, and a dozen of Champagne in their brains, are setting themselves down together to plan a campaign, issue orders for a siege, and direct the route of an army in its march—to—to—what place shall I say? I will not call it *Paris*: that would look as if I alluded to certain sapient persons in this country—but to direct the operations, we will say, of a march to the moon: for that would be a project quite as likely to succeed as some that have been formed. Well, they have formed their plan for this march to the moon, then, we will say, and hiccuping to one another



ther they begin to enquire which is the best road to reel by in this invasion. Why, says one, attack the moon on the north side, by all means.—No, says, the other, attack it in the south, against the world—or suppose we attack it in that there queer bay that we discovered the other day by the help of Ned's glasse. But in the midst of this conversation, in comes a grave, pale-faced, lawyer-looking man—with a wig so large that his face can hardly be seen between the curls, who, after turning his coat, sits down to put them to rights. “You are mistaken,” says he, “you are not to attack either “by the south or the north,—nor are you to depend upon “cannon, pike, or gun. You must attack in the centre—I “will furnish you with arms, and, if you listen to me, you “shall carry the moon, like a suit in chancery, with a quirk, “a trick, and a quibble. But fill your purses—fill your “purses, lads—for you must see on both sides, that the coun- “sel employed against you may plead your cause. No mat- “ter, you know—the people—the people must pay the fees. “They are the clients that always pay but never gain—and “thus you may expect to take the enchanted island of the “Moon.” But the winding of a gazette-horn awakens them in an instant from their dream, and they find every thing frustrated and disappointed. Ruin, disgrace, infamy and contempt have swallowed all their schemes. The whole business is to begin afresh; and the people are to be plundered again, that a fresh campaign and the sacrifice of fresh myriads of human beings may repair their blunders. But, Citizens, it is almost time to return from the moon, and seriously to resume our subject. How comes it, then, that reign after reign, administration after administration, and year after year, the rulers of the earth become more and more fond of this system of war. I will tell you, Citizens, it is from this simple reason, that the system of war has become more and more profitable? I hold here, in my hand, some facts and calculations, taken principally from a pamphlet which I recommend to your serious perusal, entitled “Facts addressed to Landholders,” &c. written, as I before informed you, by the joint efforts of Lord Shelburn, Dr. Price, and John Horne Tooke, and other documents collected from the minister's budget, by which I can prove that every war, and every year of war, though the burden becomes more calamitous to the people, and more disgraceful to the character of Britons,—this self same system of war becomes more profitable, and productive of more grandeur, power and emolument to the rulers of the nation; and that of course  
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the more it becomes necessary for you to put a stop to the system of war, the more determined your ministers will be that it shall go on: because it cannot be expected, while the people are stupid enough to support them in opposition to their own interests, that they will be so stupid as to refuse to be so supported. I find, Citizens, from comparing these facts with facts stated by *Hume*, in his *Essays*, that the system of war is, at this time, six times as profitable to the minister as it was fifty years ago: that is to say, that the patronage and the emoluments, in other words, the *expences* of war, are six times as great as they were then.

*Hume* has estimated the patronage of the army and navy at one million per year. It has now grown to between five and six millions per year; consequently there are five or six millions in this department at the disposal of the minister of the crown, to increase the torrent of corruption, and sweep with more rapid force from the surface of the country, the little remaining virtue and independence which were left among the higher circles. It is too late, Citizens, at this hour of the night (even if your patience would permit, my health would not) to enter particularly into these calculations: but I will call upon you seriously to consider what it is you are about, and whither you are going. I call upon you to reflect and weigh in your minds, whether a few plain and simple facts—such indeed as are almost known to every individual who hears me, will not demonstrate this truth—that where the scourge of the universe, the annihilation of intellect, the destruction of the middling and the depression and ruin of the lower orders of society, is the banquet of ministers, it can only be by the united efforts, by the enlightened determination, by the firm, the manly and yet, at the same time, the peaceful and virtuous exertions of the great body of the people that such a system can be terminated.

Let me dismiss you then, Citizens, for this evening, with a solemn appeal to your reason and moderation. Standing in this place, I am obliged to speak to you strong and monstrous facts. I commenced this course of Lectures with little else than a detail of facts: and such a detail of facts never in any former period of English history could have been brought before an audience. I have trespassed frequently, no doubt, upon your time and patience, because I knew it was necessary to have a broad foundation upon which my principles should rest; and that laying this foundation in facts, and



rearing upon those facts the strong pillars of principle, I might be enabled to found a temple of Reason and of Liberty, at least in speculation, upon which you perhaps might improve, and under which your posterity might live in happiness through unborn ages.

But, Citizens, when I recollect the nature of the facts that I have to bring before you—when I consider what little I have been able to discover of the human character—when I reflect how prone we are to the detestable and contemptible spirit of revenge—when I consider how seldom we reason, and how frequently we give the reins to passion and resentment, I am obliged, every now and then, to call home your scattered thoughts and to curb and restrain the passions which these facts have such a tendency to awaken, that I may impress deeply upon your remembrance the object to which I wish to direct you.

I do not stand here to say inflammatory things, and then shelter myself behind the pretence of wishing for nothing but peace and tranquillity: I scorn such arts and evasions. In the strong holds of the *Tower*, in the dungeons of *Newgate*, at the bar of the *Old Bailey*, I have never shrunk from the principles that actuate my soul. I shall not here begin the base arts of hypocrisy which there I disdained to practise. It is not therefore from caution, but from principle that I invoke you not so far to mistake me as to suppose that I mean to rouse you to personal animosity or violence. I know that violence is not half so great a crime in the eyes of those I speak against, as plain fact, bold and determinate principle, and a clear determination of mind to abide by the conclusions to which that principle will lead. This I know to be the most dangerous of all things. The danger I wish to ward off is your danger—the danger of the public cause—not mine. I have thrown my life into the public stock: I consider myself as a man too resolutely determined to speak the truth, to think that his life is worth an insurance. I have made up my determination that either the minister of this country shall stick my head upon a pole, or I will spoil his trade of corruption and desolation. I will use my reason till the sabre or the halter stop my throat.

All the caution that I wish to impress upon your minds relates to the public cause: and I conjure you, by all that is noble in the name of man, by all that is dignified in intellect and virtue, by all that is dear to you in the universe; by the love of those sweet babes which may cling to your knees,  
and

and ask from your hands the boon of liberty and an enlightened education, that liberty may be understood and enjoyed—I conjure you by all these to bear it for ever in your minds, that reason, and not tumult, is the medium through which political amelioration must be obtained. If your calamities were only the inclosure of a few fields—if those who injured you were only a private combination of thieves and robbers, there might be some pretence and expectation that redress should come from the violent exertions of manual strength: but your situation is different: It is not men (though there may be some whom it is impossible not to despise!) It is not men that ought to be the objects of your attention: it is principle.

Corruption is your misfortune; and you cannot, by wreaking vengeance on the head of a few individuals, remedy that corruption. There is no redress for you but in a peaceable, but thorough reform in the system of your representation. Do not, at this time, when famine is gnawing at the vitals of so many worthy individuals, when so many wrongs and so many insults, have been inflicted upon the nation—do not listen to the voice of a few violent enthusiasts, who perhaps may be spies to those who think that there is no silencing the public opinion but by establishing a military despotism; and that there is no establishing a military despotism without a pretence of riot, tumult, and confusion: be not deluded by such men. If violent spirits—whether the dupes or the successors of the *Lynams*, the *Groveses* the *Goslings*, and their long train of perjurers and assassins who enjoy the confidence of gentlemen high in office—or whether they be individuals stung by their own private wrongs, or their mistaken sense of the subject before them—If violent spirits would urge you to rashness, suffer them not to draw you from the direct line of reason and investigation; and I hazard nothing by the prophecy, when I say, that if we act with prudence, and avoid commotion, there is no power on earth can make the present system of corruption last to the close of the present century. Do you not see that it is preying upon its own vitals? Do you not see the shifts and artifices it is obliged to appeal to: even that military which it wishes to depend upon it is obliged to crimp, kidnap and trepan; and after all, one part must be employed to dragoon the other, when any expedition is to be undertaken.

When corruption is driven to such shifts, and is obliged to resort to such subterfuges as we have witnessed, we know the



she is on her last legs. Do you not perceive that you are going on headlong to a sort of bankruptcy? that you are obliged in part to borrow principal one year to pay the interest of the year preceding?

Well, then, Citizens, by and by the stockholders themselves, who have hitherto been the links in the chain, which have bound and fettered us down, will become the peaceable and manly instruments of our emancipation. They will find how infamously they have been cheated and deluded; and that it will be better to reform the corruption, and let the sacred institutions of rotten boroughs fall, than that all the property of the country should be thrown into confusion, and thousands and tens of thousands of families be reduced to misery who had been used to the comforts and enjoyments of life.

It is the nature of corruption to eat itself up. Let the corruption eat away then; and the friends of liberty and of the human race shall receive the benefit. Aye, of the human race; for though I have talked of patriotism, I mean not patriotism in the paltry sense in which perhaps I should find the church warden of the next parish my rival. I mean not the happiness of a district: the *Spaniard*, the *Frenchman*, the *African*, are all my brethren; and I disdain the happiness that can be conferred upon a few at the expence of the rights, the welfare, and the felicity of the whole. With this sentiment let me dismiss you: let me invoke you to love reason, to love liberty, to love in short human happiness, for if you can find any thing that will promote human happiness more than liberty, let me beg of you to abandon liberty and pursue this new discovery—for liberty is but the means—not the end. But I, for my own part, am convinced that the only means by which the happiness of the human race can be secured, is by the diffusion of liberty—and that the only means by which this liberty can be obtained is by the steady and determined exertions of the intellectual faculties of man.

## O D E.

## TO THE ENGLISH LONG-BOW.

[FROM THE PERIPATETIC.]

VICTORIOUS weapon in the fields of Fame!

To which the *Briton's* sinewy arm applied  
Sped the long shaft, with never-failing aim,  
And the white wing in hostile crimson dyed!

How oft (when martial glory urg'd the soul)  
Our *Richards, Henrys, Edwards* prov'd thy force;  
Whose race, resistless, to Ambition's goal  
Outwing'd thy glowing arrow's fatal course.

E'en now, as distant scenes, and visions old,  
The magic powers of Fancy, pleas'd, renew,  
Rank urg'd on rank, victorious, I behold  
The gallant bands their scatter'd foes pursue.

Here bold *Cruisaders*, urg'd with holy zeal,  
Spread swift destruction thro' the impious band  
The strings resound; and gasping myriads feel  
The distant vigour of the archer's hand.

See *Cour De Lion* o'er the slaught'ring field,  
Like *Mars* himself, directs the shafts of Fate;  
Whole nations shout: the gall'd battalions yield,  
And hovering Ruin threatens the Pagan state.

Full in the van of Conquest's bold career  
*Britannia* thunders, and her sons pursue:  
All *Europe* throngs tumultuous in their rear,  
To share their triumphs, and their labours view.

'Twas thus our bowmen, in the days of yore,  
In Glory's fatal strife unequal'd stood:  
O'er *Asia's* fields their conquering banners bore,  
While the pale Crescent sunk in seas of blood.

BUT where, my Muse, on mad Ambition's wing,  
Where speeds thy flight? to what disastrous clime?  
The flattering incense of thy praise to sing  
On War's fell altar, stain'd with every crime!

What is this Glory, nurs'd in deeds of death?  
The scourge, at once, and idol of the world!  
Who breathes—and plagues and famine wait her breath!  
Who speaks—and round are blasting thunders hurl'd!

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Ah! would to heaven that Wisdom's awful voice  
Might 'midst the clamours of her train be heard!  
That Reason's dictates might direct our choice,  
And *Truth* and *Virtue* be alone rever'd.

How might the Toil—the Genius oft employ'd  
To ravage realms, and thin the human race,  
Have made whole deserts smile in useful pride,  
And deck'd the barren rock with Culture's grace!

How might that wealth which War's inhuman trade  
Has oft abus'd, to aggravate Distress,  
Have chac'd the gloom from Misery's friendless shade,  
And taught Despair the liberal hand to bless!

Yes Glory, yes—had it thy triumph been  
To heal—not wound, to cherish—not destroy:  
Thro' many a wasted realm how chang'd a scene  
Had met the sage's meditative eye!

Then had we seen instead of burning towns,  
Of fields laid waste, and horrid piles of slain,  
And all that History shudders while she owns,  
Fair smiling Peace, and Plenty's sylvan reign.

Then, as thy chariot roll'd sublime along,  
No Orphan's curses, nor no Widow's tears  
Should mix, discordant, with the shouting throng,  
And pour their anguish in thy wounded ears.

Instead of these, to strew thy peaceful way  
With flowers and fruits, and leaves of holy palm,  
The village youth before thy steeds should play,  
And Love and Music breathe the mingled charm!

There, too should Commerce pour her busy train  
To hail thee passing:—and each artist band.  
And all who pant the laurel wreath to gain  
Of liberal Science, laud thy high command.

But chief the Muse, sweet soother of my care!  
Her grateful voice should lift with fond acclaim;  
With honest pride thy splendid triumphs share,  
And swell the chorus of thy guiltless fame?

## THE TRIBUNE, No. XXXVIII.

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*A further enquiry into the CALAMITIES produced by the SYSTEM of USURPATION and CORRUPTION. Part the Sixth. Containing the Lecture on the HISTORY of the PROGRESS of the WAR SYSTEM, from the Reign of Henry the Seventh to the Present Time. Delivered Friday, October 23d, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

I Have been, during the two last evenings, dwelling upon a branch of my subject not only very important in its own nature, but which, on account of the particular circumstances of Europe, must be conspicuously interesting at this time. The subject of war, whether it be considered abstractedly, in a moral point of view, or whether it be considered with reference to historical fact, must naturally rouse the feelings of the public mind, whenever it is fairly and boldly investigated. At this time there are peculiar circumstances attached to the system, which never before were attached to it in so eminent a degree; and which make the evil of that system ten thousand fold greater than ever: since to all the crimes of violence are added a black catalogue of intrigues and vice of another kind. All the factions, all the interested views of individuals plunged in the intrigues of courts, are now particularly applied to this system; as if there were a struggle whether *corruption* or *murder* should claim the larger share of influence in the destruction of the many, for the aggrandizement and emolument of a few.

I do not mean to deny that if we consider the human character as it is, and has been in all stages of society, relative to which history has furnished us with any record—I do not mean to say that if we were even to strip government of its corruptions, we have sufficient ground for the opinion that universal peace would reign uninterrupted over the earth. Man has many vices, the consequence of that ignorance from which he has but half emerged. Man has also many vices

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which, though, at this time, they appear not the immediate creations of the vices of government, do, in reality, spring from the corrupt systems of government that have so long existed in the world, and have stamped a sort of character upon the human race, which, but for the prejudices, delusions and vices of political institutions, even ignorance itself would never have occasioned. But whatever dispositions to violence and hatred may exist in the human character, however well the supposition may be founded, that men, living in the neighbourhood of each other, will occasionally suppose they have separate interests, and therefore destroy each other for the promotion of those interests, yet, if mankind were left to the natural workings of the heart and the lessons of experience, calamity and distress would soon teach them the necessity of cessation from those hostilities; and wars could neither be so frequent, nor so durable as they are at present. But unfortunately for the human race, according to the present organization of society, the very circumstances which ought to convince them of the necessity of a pacific system, have a tendency to increase the duration of war: because public calamities render it more easy for corrupt and arbitrary governments to carry on their schemes of war and ambition. Those very calamities also render war and ambition, though more destructive to the people, more profitable to those rulers whose vicious system teaches them to set up the interest of the rulers in opposition to the interest of the great mass of mankind.

Citizens, the proofs of what I am now telling you present themselves almost in every page of every history that records the wars and contests of different nations. I have before me, at this time, a passage so striking and so emphatic, conveying at once such strong sentiment, and such forcible facts, that I think myself bound to read it to you. It is from the History of the first ten years of the reign of George the Third. (The history of the first, second, and third ten years, and of the first half of the fourth ten years having been published in successive volumes, by *Evans* in Paternoster-row.) Giving a brief detail of the last war of George the Second, and taking a review of the events upon the continent, the historian is led to paint the glory of the great Frederick in its proper colours—that is to say, he gives you, by a simple detail of facts, the most horrible and detestable picture of the scenes of pillage, murder, treachery and barbarism carried on by that hero: and speaking of the calamities and mischiefs that this system  
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had brought, not only upon hostile countries, but even upon the country of the hero himself, the author thus expresses himself: "A contagious disease which broke out in the armies diffused itself among the inhabitants, and made dreadful havock. The cattle too were seized with a pestilential distemper; and famine was added to their other calamities. These circumstances," continues the historian, "rendered it more easy for the King of *Prussia* to recruit his armies; the life of a soldier being an object of envy to the miserable peasantry, and death seeming more honourable, and less certain by the sword than by want. In the spring no gaps were seen in his armies: they were, by *these* and other resources, made up to their full compliments." Such, then, are the advantages which heroes and military despots derive from the calamities and miseries which they bring upon their people. When famine and pestilence are raging at home, they know that the peasant will more readily neglect his plough, and the starving manufacturer be more easily induced to expose his throat to the sword of hostile violence. Nor has it been only in Germany and during the war, which I have now been speaking of, that similar effects have been produced from similar causes. Even in this country, and at this very time, how many thousands of poor beings, who had but little affection for the cause, have been induced, by the grinding hand of misery and famine, to sell themselves to the trade of massacre, as the only means to escape from the dreadful catastrophe of being starved to death amidst the dearth and scarcity of every necessary of life, and the total failure of almost every useful occupation, produced by the present *just and necessary war*.

Neither is this the whole of the mischief. Not only is it more easy for those who prefer their own ambition to the welfare of their people to fill the ranks of their armies, in consequence of these growing calamities, but these growing calamities enable corrupt and vicious ministers to fill their purses more abundantly with the pillage and plunder of the nation. When famine seems to be approaching, when distress and want are imprinted upon every face, it is easy for a knot of artful, designing individuals, who wish to enrich themselves by the public misery, under the pretence of increasing the resources of the country, to dabble in commercial contracts and monopolies, by which, though perhaps the price of the market may be considerably higher than if it were left to the fair exertions of commercial adventurers, the politic monopolists



swell to more inordinate wealth, and bequeath more extravagant fortunes to their posterity, to support the gaudy titles which are ultimately to reward their prostitution.

This system, Citizens, has been adopted in more countries than one: and I am not so blindly infatuated with the transactions of a neighbouring country as not to be able to discover improper proceedings among the factious leaders of their National assemblies. This, I believe, has been one of the means by which particular members of the National Convention have enriched themselves to a considerable degree. It is, therefore, perfectly consistent with persons leagued for the destruction of their republican system, to adopt precisely the same line of proceeding: for it has been uniformly the practice of a certain set of men to abuse every thing done by the French Convention, and to imitate the worst parts of every plan and project which the Convention set on foot.

Citizens, we shall find, also, that in proportion as the war is more obstinately persisted in, and becomes more calamitous and disastrous to the nation, the patronage of the minister increases. Consequently his power of enriching himself and friends, and securing himself more permanently in the seat of office, grows out of those very circumstances which ought to hurl him, disgraced, deprived, and abandoned, from his ill-gotten power.

Thus, if we examine this subject, we shall find—

In the first place, that *war is a profitable thing to corrupt and vicious governments;*

In the next place, that *the more distress and ruin it bring upon the people, the greater is the power of such governments to perpetuate the system.*

And, in the third place, that *in proportion as the system of war grows to a more alarming extent, and the calamities of the people increase, will the power, profit, and patronage be increased of those ministers, who, by vicious intrigues, debauch constitutions they pretend to reverence, and destroy the laws, which they would execute the most cruel vengeance upon others for daring to suppose could be amended.*

But, Citizens, it is not my intention to confine myself to declamatory investigation. I understand that on the last evening certain Aristocrats found fault with me, that I dwelt so much upon general principles and descriptions, and did not give them facts enough. If they had attended former lectures they would have heard more facts than they would like to remember: and as it appears to me that facts and principles are  
equally

equally valuable, I conceive that, sometimes, principles and morals should constitute the body of these lectures, and sometimes facts—stubborn, irresistible, historical facts, upon which those principles may be built, and upon which the temple of liberty may rest for its support, against the calumnies of those who are afraid to enquire, and the persecutions of those who know that if others enquire they must be undone.

It is not usual, however, for those Aristocrats to be so very fond of facts. Some little time ago, when committees of Crown Lawyers, for what purpose I do not pretend to say, held their nightly cabals in secrecy, I observed that certain agents of those Crown Lawyers insinuated themselves pretty regularly among the company at this place. As soon, however, as two or three stubborn facts had been stated, they generally found themselves so intolerably uneasy, that, unable to bear the puncture of these sharp goads, they generally retreated—stealing down stairs—not very quietly, indeed, but endeavouring, by the noise they made there, to create that interruption which they had not the courage to attempt within the room.

However, I am very desirous of obliging gentlemen of this description: especially as, perhaps, if we do not exercise our candour towards Aristocrats now, we may never have any opportunity of exercising it: for somehow or other it happens, that in every public assembly, even in the Theatres, which, a little while ago, were the head quarters of aristocracy, every aristocratic sentiment is going out of fashion, and every democratic sentiment coming very rapidly in vogue. In short, as the progress of truth has annihilated the errors of aristocracy in thousands and tens of thousands of bosoms, let us shew a little good nature towards the Aristocrats now, while there are any to shew our good nature to, lest we should lose the opportunity of proving that our liberality is equal to our enthusiasm in the cause of liberty which we espouse.

It is partly with this design, and partly because it fell within the plan I had chalked out, that I now proceed to state a number of facts relative to the progress of this system of war, the concomitant progress of this system of corruption, and the mutual action and re-action of both to produce the ruin and misery of the people.

Citizens, let us take a survey of the history of this country, ever since Britain has been a civilized nation: which, I take it for granted, those who have studied history for the purpose of philosophising on facts, not supporting prejudices, will admit



admit to be from about the reign of *Henry VII.* The barbarous struggles and contests either of parties, or of nations, in the earlier ages, are not materials for the modern politician. Few arguments can be founded upon them that will lead to any conclusions useful to us in the present state of society. What then has been the military history of Britain since the accession of the *Tudors*? What has been the history of the state and condition of those whom we call the *lower orders of society*, but who constitute, in reality, the nerve, the sinew, the energy of the country, and without whose assistance the country could not exist? In the reign of *Henry VII.*, that is to say, at the end of the fifteenth century, (when, as I have already shewn you, 20 days labour in husbandry were sufficient to purchase a quarter of wheat—when 16 days labour would purchase a quarter of malt, and one day's labour, rustic labour, not the fine occupations of a splendid and luxuriant city, but the coarse common drudgery of the country, would purchase three gallons of ale—all other articles being in proportion)—at that period, in a reign of 24 years we had hardly any thing that could be called a foreign war. There were internal commotions enough, it is true, on account of the disputed succession of the throne—for there are factions and massacres in *regular governments* as well as in governments of republicanism. But foreign wars were very little engaged in. There was, indeed, something like a war in 1488; some troops being sent by *Henry VII.*, to assist the Duke of *Bretagne* against the King of *France*; and, in 1491, there was a sort of war commenced by *England* against *France*: but this, instead of lasting for 6, 7, or 8 years, according to the fashion of modern times, terminated in one campaign, and without a serious battle. We may, therefore, consider this reign as without any foreign wars at all.

After this we come to *Henry VIII.* who reigned at the former part of the sixteenth century: a time when 26 days labour would purchase a quarter of wheat, and so on of other articles in the same proportion. *Henry VIII.* reigned 38 years; and during his time we had three wars. But what was the duration of those wars? The first began in 1512, and concluded in 1514; the second began in 1522, a truce took place in 1524, after some cessation, they went to it again, and the peace was finally settled in 1527. In 1544 another war commenced, which closed in 1546. Thus you see, with one exception only, the natural term of a war seemed to be two years. One, by means of a truce, and being carried on  
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in a languid manner was extended to the duration of five years.

In *Edward VIth's* time, who reigned 7 years, we had a war with *France*; that is to say, the king of *France* made war upon the English for the recovery of *Boulogne*: this began in 1549 and was concluded in 1550.

Queen *Mary*, who succeeded, reigned 6 years. In her time we had an alliance with *Spain* against *France*, and the war began in 1557 (that is to say, about a year before she died) and was concluded in January 1559; so that it lasted little better than a year.

These facts may be considered as rather dry: but they are of considerable importance to shew you the connection between the miseries of the people and the progress of the system of war. In the course of the investigation I shall shew you other facts, that will equally prove the other part of my position, namely that the aggrandizement of ministers keeps pace with the oppression and ruin of the people.

After Queen *Mary* we have the martial reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, a virgin who has been celebrated in songs recorded in heroic verse, and exhibited by glossing penmen, as the mirror of excellence and perfection. Yet what was the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, when fairly and accurately examined? In her reign, in which war followed on the heels of war, and in which we were incessantly embroiled in alliances with the *French*, and in alliances with the *Dutch*—in her reign it was, that the grievance first became conspicuous of oppressing the great body of the people, by the proportion being no longer kept up between the price of labour and the prices of the necessary articles of consumption. At the beginning of her reign, 8s. per quarter was the common price of wheat, and towards the latter end the common price was 2l. 16s. od. In one or two calamitous years it rose to 3 and even to 4l.

Such were the blessed consequences, to the great body of the people, of this system of war and ambition. The name of Britain, it is true—the name of our great and glorious Queen was sounded by the trump of fame through every quarter of Europe: but misery and famine preyed upon the vitals of those classes of society by whose courage and exertion the laurels were reaped to decorate her haughty brow.

During the last season, in one of my Lectures upon the dearth and scarcity of provisions, I quoted a passage from a note in "*Hume's History of England*," from one of the  
writers



writers in the time of this Queen, containing some very curious facts concerning the *relative decrease* in the price of labour: for the price of labour is in reality decreased, when a man is not enabled by the wages he receives to get the same quantity of bread, meat, beer, and other articles as formerly. It is matter of little consequence whether he receives 2d. per day, or 20s., if his two pence at one period would purchase as much food and raiment as the twenty shillings at the other; an incontrovertible axiom, which when facts are investigated will compell us to confess that from the martial reign of Queen *Elizabeth* to the present time, year after year, reign after reign, war after war, though our name may have been sounded with growing terror by surrounding nations, the people have had increasing cause to curse the mad ambition which destroys their comforts for the aggrandisement of their rulers!

I shall not enumerate all the wars of *Elizabeth*; I have a list of them before me, with their duration; but it is not necessary to tire your patience with the tedious recital. It is sufficient to have made the calculations that authorised my conclusions; and to refer you to the page of history for the proof that the wars were more numerous, and of longer duration than ever, and that the condition of the people became proportionably more miserable.

Thence we go to the reign of *James* the First, which presents a very altered picture. The man whose name has been handed down with more infamy than almost any other that ever filled the English throne, in this point of view appears in the fairest colours of almost any of those whose names adorn the pages of our history.

I do not mean to enter into an apology for the House of *Stuart*. Their tyrannical maxims I abhor; their strides towards arbitrary power rouse my indignation; and the persecuting spirit which displayed itself at that period would command my *sovereign* disapprobation, if I did not remember the inquisitorial system that has been so recently established among us; but which, thanks to the awakening spirit of Englishmen, is now sinking into the same infamy into which the maxims of the House of *Stuart* formerly fell. But while I abhor the toryism of the House of *Stuart*, let me do justice to the peaceful temper of *James*, whose principal anxiety appears to have been to preserve his country in uninterrupted peace.

In

In 23 years then of this reign, we had 22 of peace. At last he was unwillingly urged into the war with *Spain*, which was left on the hands of his successor.

During this peaceful reign, as far as I can discover, the proportion between the prices of labour and the prices of the necessaries of life did not rise in any considerable degree, and there was little opportunity for men of power and wealth to oppress the industrious and laborious orders of the community.

I shall not dwell particularly upon the turbulent reign of *Charles the First*; the circumstances which took place during that period, and the struggles which immediately followed belong to another part of this investigation, and will throw but little light upon the present. I shall also pass slightly over the usurpation of *Oliver Cromwell*: a usurpation, permit me to observe, for which I have not much more veneration than for the tyrannical maxims of the House of Stuart. Nor can I but mark with express disapprobation and contempt the absurdity of a nation plunging itself into civil war and contest, to wrest the tyranny from one hand that they might vest it in another, with this consolation, forsooth, that the tyrant of the House of *Cromwell* was to be called *Protector*, while the tyrant of the House of *Stuart* was called a *King*. I shall observe, however, that the warlike and ambitious spirit of *Cromwell*, like other warlike and ambitious spirits, plunged the laborious orders of the community into miseries which could not have been experienced if peace had been preserved.

*Charles the Second* is the last of those monarchs whom I shall dwell upon in this brief way. The calculations and facts of more recent times will I hope appear more interesting. *Charles the Second* reigned 24 years, during his time the price of a quarter of wheat which used to be purchased by 20 or 22 days labour, rose to the price of 37 days labour. I put the position briefly in this form, because the poor man's labour is in reality his coin, his stock in trade; therefore, this is the fairest and most intelligible way of calculating the prices of the different articles of consumption.

During this period of 24 years we had two wars; a Dutch war, which commenced in 1664 and closed in 1667, and another which began in 1671, and closed in 1673.

Here I close my review of the wars before the revolution; and it is worth while to observe, that from the facts I have



laid before you, it appears that from the accession of *Henry the Seventh*, to the period of the revolution, the proportion of war was about one year in five. Even this was sufficient to produce considerable mischief relative to the condition of the laborious and industrious part of the community. But this will sink into nothingness, when compared to facts of a more recent date, which prove to us that *Britain*—glorious, happy, and flourishing *Britain*, which boasts the best constitution in the world, together with a peasantry the most comfortably situated of any peasantry upon the face of the earth—that *Britain*, since her glorious, happy, and venerated revolution has spent almost as many years in slaughter and devastation as in peace and tranquillity. What becomes now of your proportion of one to five! What becomes of the triumphant exclamation that “*the accustomed relationship of peace and amity*,” can only be preserved by *regular and orthodox governments*? What, Citizens, is it possible that any system of government can occasion us to be more than 50 years at war out of every 100? Is it possible that the atheistic Republic of *France* should be so constantly stimulating to hostilities that the ambition of the House of *Bourbon* should be eclipsed by this upstart and irregular government? or that we have more reason to dread the hostility of a system which we have not tried, than than the other of which we have had such disastrous experience.

Let me not however be misunderstood; it is not my intention to libel the revolution of 1688. The revolution was inestimable; but let it be prized and valued for what it was, not for what it was not. Let us reverence it, inasmuch as it opened the way to political discussion, enforced the investigation of principle, and disseminated a light and liberty through *Europe* which otherwise, perhaps, would not at this time have been so far diffused. Let us reverence the revolution in 1688, inasmuch as it put down a race of tyrants, abolished the claims of divine right, and proved, by practice, as well as by theory, that the only legitimate source of government is the approbation of the people, for whose happiness government was instituted, and for whose advantage, alone, it ought to be perpetuated and held sacred. Let us reverence also the revolution for having given birth to the political labours of a *Locke*, a *Somers*, and a *Defoe*; and having stamped with authority and approbation the political speculations of a *Sydney*. Let us venerate the revolution for having consecrated the me-

mony of the holy martyrs of liberty, and erased the names of *Sydney* and of *Russel* from the journals of infamy, to engrave them as upon adamantine pillars in the temple of eternal fame and virtue; where, to the end of time, they will receive the veneration of mankind.

But let us not pretend to venerate the revolution of 1688, on account of any system of purity which it introduced either into the cabinet or senate of this country: for I believe, if we investigate with boldness and accuracy, we shall be obliged to confess that *one of the first effects of the revolution in 1688, was the organization of a system of corruption*; which, day after day, has been growing upon us; and which threatens to swallow up in its vortex every thing valuable in the constitution of the country, or desirable for the welfare and happiness of its inhabitants.

Let us confess that one of the first effects of this revolution was the national debt. Let us acknowledge also, that another of the fruits of this revolution was the system still more fatal and destructive than all others, the system of *continental alliances*—in other words, of ambitious projects in countries with which we had no right to interfere. Hence the waste of millions upon millions of British treasure, and torrents of British blood to support that air-drawn phantom, *the balance of power*.

The best things are frequently so perverted as to produce bad consequences. The purest principles are sometimes mixed with the arts and intrigues of interested individuals, who pursue the most corrupt system of conduct. The most glorious events in the annals of the human race have been attended with their calamities; and it is not only in *France*, where a revolution producing many good effects has produced some bad ones also. In short, the revolution in 1688, produced some good and some evil: but remember that the evil it has produced is in opposition to its principle, not growing out of that principle: let it not therefore be supposed; that I condemn the revolution in 1688, because I condemn the practices which vicious administrations have grafted upon that event.

But what has been the consequence with respect to the system of war?

*William* the Third reigned 13 years; nine years of which were spent in continental wars. *Queen Anne* reigned 13 years; 11 years of which were spent in continental wars.



*George* the Second reigned 34 years, and had two wars, one of nine years and one of seven, making together *sixteen* years. *George* the Third (whom God long preserve!) has reigned 36 years; during that time we have had two wars and two preparations for wars, besides that in which he found himself engaged when he came to the throne. These two wars, putting them together, and remember the second is not yet concluded, give you eleven years of war during the present reign.

Now, consider what are the dispositions of ministers at this time. It is said indeed that stocks rose two per cent. to-day, upon the report that the minister had written a very pacific speech for his Majesty. I wish it may be true, for the present war has already cost us 70 millions of additional debt; besides the increase of taxes; and if we should have peace directly, in all probability, it will be necessary to contract a debt of 30 millions more to make up accounts: but if we should go on another year, and another to that, I am lamentably afraid that *Pitt*, after having taxed us—no, *you*—*my* head at least goes tax free—having taxed you from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, will not find a single joint in the whole animal system to lay fresh taxes upon, to enable him to obtain *indemnity for the past and security for the future!!!*

But setting aside this melancholy prospect, let us reflect what is already the consequence of this system of half a century of war for half a century of peace; and remember, that when I say that half the last century has been consumed in war, I do not take into the calculation the cruel and unprincipled wars which have been waged in the *East Indies*; where Commerce, that ought to uphold the laurel of peace, and scatter plenty over the world—Commerce that ought, upon the wings of science, to be soaring to the light of truth and liberality, has become the vilest agent of depredation and murder—has bathed her feet with blood, and clothed her head with horrors, so as to be no longer known to those who admire the purity of her native attractions. Commerce has lighted the torch of discord, treachery and devastation—while millions of poor beings, whose only crime was to have been born in the country, upon whose wealth chartered monopoly had fixed its avaricious eyes, have been slaughtered by the butchering hand of men who *call* themselves *Britons*; but who from the lust of personal aggrandisement, whet the falchion in the blood of their fellow-beings, and forget that man has a title to the feelings of humanity!

What

What has been the consequence of all this? what is the condition of the common people at this time?

I have traced the prices of wheat and malt as the most essential articles at different periods. Let us see the consequence which the system of war has produced in this respect in later times. There are persons, I know, who have the audacity to affirm, that the price of labour has kept pace with the price of the necessaries of life; but it is not true. I have presented you again and again with documents to prove, that the increase of the price of labour bears no sort of proportion to the increased price of the necessaries of life. On the contrary, a man at this very time toils four days, nay, in some instances, six or eight days, to procure the same necessaries of life, which 3 or 400 years ago he procured by the labour of a single day.

The consequences, then, to the common people, of this system of war and ambition is, that a quarter of wheat, instead of being purchased by 20 days labour, is not to be purchased with less than the labour of 80 days. You will remember, that I may not be liable to any misrepresentation, that when I speak of 80 and 20 days, I speak not of the price of wages paid in *London* and other great cities, but of the wages of those who labour in husbandry,—the labour of those who create the necessaries of life, and without whose labour you yourselves would have nothing to eat.

I do not mean to throw reproach, I do not mean to throw contempt, upon any class of Citizens, nor do I mean to say that the shop-keeper, the merchant, the man of small property, and the man devoting his time to the improvement of the human mind, are not useful members of society. But remember, you who attend your shops, you who follow your learned professions, you who live in ease and enjoyment, that, but for the husbandman who digs the earth, but for the labourer who produces the common necessaries of subsistence, you could have no shops to attend, no professions to follow, no ease, no comfort, no luxuries to enjoy; your ears would be feasted no more with the soft strains of music; the fine arts would portray the events of past history no longer to your eyes, nor could you indulge your palates with those cheering and recreating luxuries, which, if obtained by honest means, and if you suffer not the poor to languish in want while you are enjoying them, are not only harmless, but proper. But suffer me to impress it deeply upon your memories, that while the higher orders are increasing in wealth, luxury, and extravagant enjoyment,



joyment, the common people are sinking, year after year lower down the vale of misery, till *insulting charity* is obliged to step in to supply the deficiencies of that support which every man who labours has a right independently to enjoy as the fruit and produce of his labours.

A quarter of wheat then, instead of being bought for 20 days labour, is now not to be purchased with the labour of less than 80 days; a quarter of malt, instead of 16 days labour, costs 43. The consequence is, that through the greatest part of this happy, plentiful, flourishing country, the poor peasant wets his morsel of bread with unmixed water: and as not only the most indubitable authorities, but the evidence of my own observation authorises me to affirm that, week after week and month after month, the poor peasant is condemned to toil without having the opportunity of obtaining a drop even of small beer; and yet aristocracy dares to tell us, that if the common people are in want, it is to be attributed to their own laziness and debauchery.

Such, then, are the effects of the system of war. Such are the effects of ministerial artifice and ambition. Such are the effects of that system of corruption so completely organized among us. Such are the consequences of depriving the great body of the people of their elective franchise, and filling the Commons House of Parliament, instead of the representatives of the people, with the representatives of rotten boroughs and monopolists.

What then is the proper remedy for these evils? Citizens, there is no remedy but parliamentary reform: and that reform I think I shall be able to shew you, to be effectual, must be upon the system of universal suffrage, and annual representation.

That all our calamities, and the growth of the system of war among the rest, proceed from corruption, I think I shall shew you next Wednesday evening, when I come to speak of patronage, the perquisites of office, contracts, contractors, and other appendages of the present happy and glorious system.

## GODWIN'S PAMPHLET.

HAVING this day received the following note, I take the first opportunity of complying with the request with which it is introduced.

Indeed, inasmuch as it is intended as an answer to my Preface, I conceived it to be an act of *justice* to the author to give it insertion, that, thus, in all probability, every person who has read my Censure, may read, also, his Defence.

But upon this principle how is the "Lover of Order" to do justice to me? and what recompence is this mode of explanation for the odious impressions which his former language must have a tendency to produce in the minds of *his* readers? Those who peruse these volumes will know, without any acknowledgments, or explanations, that my Lectures bear no evidences of that character which the perusal of the pamphlet in question is calculated to suggest. But, I repeat it, my bitterest enemies are to be found among those whose prejudices having been inflamed by such misrepresentations as I complain of in this instance, will neither read nor listen to any thing that comes from me. How shall *such* readers be informed that although Mr. Godwin has *said* all these bitter things, he did not *mean* them? and that if he had been at "leisure," when he wrote his pamphlet, to consider what he was saying, he should have recollected that I was neither like "Lord George Gordon preaching peace to the rioters in "Westminster Hall", nor "Iago, conjuring Othello not to "give harbour to a thought of jealousy?"

But though the "Lover of Order" cannot do me justice for the hasty calumny, which, however it was *meant*, his pamphlet cannot fail to *convey* to the public; and although *the pamphlet still continues before the public, with all its aggravating passages unsoftened and unexplained*, I shall neglect no means in my power to do *him* justice. Let him speak therefore for himself.

"The writer of the pamphlet subscribed *A Lover of Order*, which is animadverted on in the Preface to the Second Volume of the Tribune, requests the insertion of the following remarks in some subsequent number.

"They have two objects :

"The



"The first, to disavow any purpose of imputing sinister intentions to the Lecturer. I have delivered my ideas upon the general impropriety of such imputations, with as much precision as I was capable of. In p. 15 of the pamphlet, I had occasion to animadvert with freedom upon the London Corresponding Society and the Lectures of Mr. Thelwall. It happens that the paragraph here referred to stands exactly in the interval between those two subjects. I conceive at present that the similes of *Iago* and *Lord George Gordon*, which have given offence to the Lecturer, are not so free from the possibility of being wrested and misapprehended, as the illustrations I might have chosen at a moment of perfect leisure, and if it had not been necessary to produce the pamphlet (if it were to be produced) with extreme rapidity. But I am persuaded that, by the person who will attentively consider the similes, and the paragraph referred to together, they will neither be wrested nor misapprehended. When I styled the Lecturer's exhortations to benevolence "saving clauses," I meant nothing more than to express my opinion of their inefficacy, and that the anger he excited would constantly get the better of the benevolence. I have always entertained an opinion more than usually favourable of the character of Mr. *Thelwall*, and have never been sparing in expressing it.

"My second object is to say a few words as to the supposed unseasonableness of my animadversions upon the Lectures. The Lecturer, it seems, would have had me trust to appearances. They were about to be closed," he says, "as it appeared for ever." *Preface*, p. xvi. I am not apt to trust to appearances. I had not that faith in *Lord Grenville's* and *Mr. Pitt's* bills, as to suppose that they would put a close for ever to every thing that I might regard as intemperate or dangerous in the partisans of liberty. I considered them as incapable of producing any thing more than a short suspension of hostilities. I considered them as "an unwilling homage, that the too eager advocates of authority were paying to the rising genius of freedom." [*Considerations*, &c. p. 86.] Of consequence, I believed that this was a time in which it was peculiarly "to be desired that an individual should be found, who could preserve his mind untainted with the headlong rage of faction, whether for men in power or against them; judge, with the sobriety of distant posterity, and the sagacity of an enlightened historian; and be happy enough to make his voice heard, by all those directly or remotely interested in the event." p. 1, 2.

"It

"It seems I have a higher opinion of the importance of the Lectures than is entertained by their author. He thinks I ought to have been prevented from delivering my sentiments to the public respecting them, by considerations of "friendship and esteem." *Preface*, p. xv. I, on the contrary, believed that the public stake in their tendency, whether beneficial or otherwise, was of more moment than to be superseded by those principles of gentlemanly decorum; which will perhaps never endure an examination in the courts of morality and reason. I acted in this instance, with that preference of public to private considerations, which it is the object of the Lectures to recommend."

WITH respect to this last paragraph, I must observe, that it very considerably misrepresents the passage alluded to in my Preface. However the writer and myself may differ as to the *means* of reform, there are certain *principles* of politics and morality upon which we are very well agreed, and particularly upon those maxims which define *justice* as the sole basis of *virtue*, and the promotion of the *general good*, as the sole criterion of justice—My complaint against the "Lover of Order," is not that he has sacrificed "friendship and esteem" to public justice, (when such sacrifice is *necessary*, it is baseness not to make it) but that it was the tendency of his retired habits, "to deaden the best sympathies of nature, and encourage a *selfish and personal vanity*, which the recluse philosopher first mistakes for principle, and then *sacrifices to it* every feeling of private, and sometimes of public *justice*;" and my accusation is explicitly "that the author in his extreme anxiety for the *reputation* of candour, overlooked every consideration of *justice* to a friend assailed by all the persecuting bitterness of powerful malice."

The fact is, that the means of doing justice to these Lectures have never been embraced by the "Lover of Order." He has attended but twice, once before my commitment to the Tower, and once since my acquittal. He says, however, that he had *looked through* such of them as were published: but even if he had *read them through*, he would have been but ill qualified to judge of the general effect upon the *audience*, without witnessing that uniform solicitude with which I calmed every rising irritation, and protected from every species of resentment even those spies and hirelings who frequently insinuated themselves into the room, for the



express purpose of insulting the Lecturer, interrupting the discourse, and irritating the passions of the hearers. In the printed copies the greater part of these occasional digressions, as well as of those clauses in reprobation of all personal animosity and revenge, interspersed almost in every Lecture, are omitted, to avoid those repetitions of sentiment, which, though justified by temporary circumstances, would be not only unnecessary, but tedious and disgusting in the closet.

The "Lover of Order" would also have learned by such attendance that the reflection upon public speakers "bartering the tone of their own minds for the tone of their auditors," p. 19. was by no means applicable. So far from it, that the constancy with which I persevered in sentiments hostile to all violence and revenge, converted many of my earliest attenders into bitter denunciators, and occasioned the completion of my audience to be so considerably altered as could not fail to demonstrate to every impartial observer that the inflexibility of principle, and not the prejudices of the hearers, gave tone to the sentiments delivered from the Tribune. That the popular Lecturer is exposed to strong temptations in this respect is undoubtedly true: but my eyes were open to the danger, and my jealousy was accordingly on the watch: and, though I was careful to avoid the imperiousness of the dictator, and to disclaim all pretences of infallibility, let these volumes be my witnesses, that I did not forget that I occupied the place of an *instructor*, and that it was accordingly my first duty, to examine my own heart, and respect my own opinions.

I love the approbation of my fellow citizens, I confess; but I have not forgotten that *he who sells his principles for applause, is as base as he who barter them for a place or a pension.*

The pamphlet in question has been noticed in a very candid and impartial way in the *Critical Review*; and it is evident that the writer of that article understood what is said of the Lectures in the same point of view as I have. The following passage, with an exception to the antiquated prejudice which exalts the duties of *friendship* over those of *justice*, exhibits, I conceive, a very just critique upon the exceptionable passages.

"HAVING thus analysed the work, we shall point out one or two to us apparent inconsistencies in it. In speaking of  
of

of the meetings of the London Corresponding Societies, he overlooks entirely the tranquillity, good order, and decorum which their advocates boast have prevailed in them, and hurries us back to the riots of Lord George Gordon. Without pretending to enter into the motives or the propriety of the former meetings, as impartial men unconnected with either, we cannot but think that insinuations on the possible effects of a meeting, without stating that meetings had been held without producing such effects, or seeming likely to produce them, are acts of injustice to the Society which called the meeting.

“ But if the writer’s zeal has thus apparently hurried him too far, in speaking of the Corresponding Society, we must confess that there appears something still more extraordinary in the language used towards the Lecturer of Beaufort Buildings, if the writer (as has been said) was, till he published this pamphlet, the Lecturer’s *friend*, and was received by him with open arms. The Lecturer could scarcely have been treated in such a manner by his greatest enemy; and at a time when the opinions of the public are much divided concerning him, very strong facts indeed ought to have been alledged in proof of the author’s assertions; and even then the voice of *friendship* might have urged something in mitigation of the offence. If the insinuations are false, Iago’s conduct, and that of the writer, claim equal reprobation: but we speak as men who respect the sympathies of friendship, and are not initiated into that *philosophy*, which would teach us to reject some of the best feelings of human nature.

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*Lines written by a Female Citizen!*

WHY slumbers now my Muse? is this a time?  
 When savage war depopulates each clime?  
 When dire destruction holds her deadly sway,  
 And rising horrors blast the face of day?  
 When the once fruitful field is crimson’d o’er,  
 And earth’s pale bosom stain’d with horrid gore,  
 While many a weeping peasant’s left to mourn,  
 His harvest trampled, and his hopes forlorn,  
 His kindred slain, and his once happy cot,  
 (Where oft at eve, the day’s hard toil forgot,  
 The rural sport and rustic dance was seen,  
 And joy fantastic trod the neighbouring green)  
 Wrapt in devouring flames, or prostrate laid  
 By frantic glory’s desolating trade.

Here



Here as I turn with sympathy oppress'd,  
 With indignation rising in my breast,  
 My injur'd country's woes demand my care.  
 Detested scowls her ripening fate declare :  
 Britannia's children droop in galling chains,  
 And lawless Pow'r her boasted annals stains ;  
 With strides gigantic shakes the trembling land,  
 And lifts aloft oppression's iron hand !

Strike every chord ! apall the guilty breast !  
 Bid titl'd Pomp his gilded crimes detest ;  
 Bid fell Injustice melt his heart of stone,  
 Nor dare to triumph 'midst the general groan,  
 Nor seek fresh plunder from a sinking state,  
 Where thousands perish for the proud and great.—  
 The great ! in what ? in worth and virtue ?—no ;  
 Virtue must shrink from man's inveterate foe ;  
 From those who honest industry despoil,  
 Fed by the tradesman's and the peasant's toil—  
 Their toil who labour for their scanty meal,  
 Constrain'd the woes of indigence to feel,  
 While the best produce of their daily gains,  
 The drones of vice and luxury maintains.

Ah, wretched land ! in every spot is found  
 Corruption's fatal influence black'ning round :  
 Here misery and want are hourly seen,  
 With pallid look, and supplicating mien,  
 Complaint and useless clamour wound the ear,  
 While Pity drops the unavailing tear !  
 Unable to relieve, she mourns in vain  
 Wrongs that the mass of humankind sustain.

Could our brave fires, who for their country's good,  
 In Freedom's noble struggle shed their blood—  
 Could those who dar'd a tyrant to controul,  
 And shook with coward fear his guilty soul—  
 Could those, I say, now view our fallen state,  
 View the unnumber'd ills that round us wait,  
 See each lov'd right and privilege expire,  
 And Freedom from her native seat retire ;  
 How would each Patriot of those days of yore,  
 Our abject state and wretchedness deplore !  
 How would each great and godlike spirit moan,  
 The glorious object of their toils o'erthrown !  
 Those fires who dar'd with tyranny contend,  
 A peoples' dearest interests to defend,  
 Anxious their charter'd liberties to save,  
 They scorn'd the life that bore the name of slave !

F. A. C.

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XXXIX.

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*A further Enquiry into the CALAMITIES produced by the SYSTEM of BOROUGH-MONGERING USURPATION and CORRUPTION. Part the Seventh.—Containing the Fourth Lecture on the PROGRESS of the WAR SYSTEM, from the Reign of Henry the Seventh to the present Time; with Strictures on PATRONAGE, COMMISSARIES, CONTRACTORS, &c. Delivered Wednesday Oct. 28, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

IN the first and second Lectures upon the Connection between the System of Corruption and the System of War, I dwelt particularly upon general principles, and descriptions of the calamities of war; and, in the Lecture of the last evening, I proceeded more particularly to apply those general principles and descriptions, to prove the increasing misery and calamities which result from the continuance of this system. I undertook to demonstrate, in the first place, that the *growing misery of the people is proportionate to the increased frequency and obstinacy of war*; that is to say, that not only during the continuance of war, but even after the respective wars had ceased, the permanent misery engrafted upon the social stock (if I may so express myself) became greater, in proportion as wars had been repeated, and as the *trade of war* had been reduced to a regular system.

In the next place, I undertook to shew you that *the System of War and the System of Corruption have gone hand in hand*; that, in proportion as the legislative body (for why should we mince the matter?) has become more and more corrupt, the growth of that system of massacre, plunder, devastation and deceit, which is denominated the glorious and honourable

No. XXXIX.

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science



science of War, has encreased also; that those wars have, in their turn, assisted the progress and growth of Corruption, and have become (if I may so express myself) chief articles of the stock in trade in the ministerial shop of Corruption; without which it would be impossible for the dealers in that trade to avoid that bankruptcy, which every one, who wishes well to mankind, must desire to see.

In the third place, I undertook to shew you, that *the more miserable the condition of the people, the more easy it is for unprincipled and ambitious rulers to continue the system of War*; as also, that, *in proportion to the calamities of the people, this system becomes more and more profitable to the ministers and tools of Corruption*; and that, consequently, it is to their interest to keep you miserable, that they may be able to go on with war, and to their interest to sacrifice you in unnecessary and ridiculous crusades, that they may promote their own peculations, and the power of patronizing the peculations of their friends and dependants.

The first branch of this statement, I flatter myself, I demonstrated beyond the possibility of contradiction, on the last evening. For though it is undoubtedly true (as has been sometimes said by divines and theologians of a certain book) that you may pick out *particular passages by which you may prove any thing*, and make what they consider as the word of Truth an instrument of support to the dæmon of Falshood; and although it is equally true, that, if you are to pick out only a few particular facts of history, wherever you chuse to select them, you may be able historically to prove any argument you chuse; yet this objection will not hold to the arguments I have given you. I did not bring forward solitary instances, or select passages, but shewed you, in a concise manner, *ALL the facts* that relate to the subject, during the last 400 years of British history. Having thus shewn that, from the beginning to the end of that period, *every* historical fact, in regular and connected series, supports the assertion that the growing weight of permanent misery has corresponded with the growing frequency, and continued obstinacy of war; having shewn that the history of this country, ever since it could be considered as a civilized nation, bears me out in this assertion, I think I may set cavillers at defiance, and venture to assert that Mr. Pitt's arithmetic never produced so fair a demonstration to his confiding majority in the Commons House of Parliament.

I also

I also brought forward many miscellaneous arguments, in support of the other two branches of my statement. But these are subjects which demand a more accurate and close investigation; and it is my business this evening to proceed with the argument in as demonstrative a way as the nature of the subject will permit. I think I shall be able to satisfy you that reigns of military ambition have generally, nay uniformly, been reigns also of government corruption; that they have gone hand in hand together, and, like twins, born under the same star, and labouring under the same influence, have equally contributed to plunge mankind into every species of misery. In short, that the real interpretation of national glory, splendid achievements, great conquests, and military renown, when rendered into intelligible language, is neither more nor less than this—the murder of one half of the inhabitants of the country, and the *starvation* of the rest:—I beg pardon, not of *all* the rest:—Priests, with fat pluralities, seldom starve in consequence of the miseries of the poor. Great Generals, who receive good salaries without performing any service, and are perhaps commissaries and superintendants at east, north, west and south, without even quitting their own fire-sides, and the enjoyment of their friends and bottles, are also another class of men who are seldom starved by the calamities of long and obstinate wars. Commissaries and contractors, who build palaces, and reap the advantages of loans, bonuses, contracts, &c. &c. are also another set of men, who, if we may judge by the *composure* of their countenances, or the sleekness of their bodies, are seldom in much danger of being starved. Nay, Citizens, it is part of my argument to shew you that Prime Ministers, also, their vice Prime Ministers, and their dependents, are fattened, not starved, by these calamities. But as they are apt, when they speak of *public welfare* and *general happiness*, to think only of themselves, and to put the great body of the people entirely out of the question, so we also get a habit of revengeful retaliation, and, when speaking of the *welfare, happiness, and prosperity of the people*, are apt to forget that those great Ministers, great Generals, and the like, are any bodies at all.

But, Citizens, if it be true that these reigns of martial enterprize and achievement are productive of so much calamity and mischief *to the people*, as in one part of the argument I have already proved, and in others I am proceeding to prove, what deluded, what weak, what fantastic beings are



we, to suffer ourselves thus to be made worse than stepping-stones—for stepping-stones feel not; but the foot of Oppression, which presses our necks, or tramples upon our rights, afflicts us with innumerable pangs!—What worse than idiots, I say, must we be, to suffer ourselves to be made worse than stepping-stones to the ambition of a few worthless beings, who, amidst rolls of parchment and quibbles of the law, learn tactics; or at the board of Revelry, amidst the excesses of debauchery and intoxication, plan those projects and campaigns by which thousands and tens of thousands, more useful and valuable than themselves, are to be sacrificed, while the harvest to those whom they leave behind is not only commiseration and anguish, but want, penury, and servitude; every million, nay every guinea, that is added to our public burdens, being an additional chain to weigh and press us down into the bottomless pit of Tyranny and Corruption.

In support of my argument, Citizens, I shall not go back to those ages of barbarism when War was the only trade or science cultivated; but in this, as in the former part of the investigation, I shall confine myself to those facts which press nearer upon us. And here, Citizens, I beg leave to remind you that the first martial sovereign, since the æra of civilization, is *Henry VIII.* a prince very fond of foreign expeditions, who dreamed sometimes of marching to the gates of Paris, and who made grand alliances with Emperors, and the Lord knows who, to carry on wars in which the people had no sort of interest, but which were to be supported at the expence of their lives, and by burdens heaped upon their shoulders.

This age of *Henry VIII.* was certainly one of those in which ministers might, with as much propriety as at present at least, boast of the grandeur, prosperity, and dignity of the country. Yet what was the condition of the people in the reign of *Henry VIII.*?—Depression and calamity, beyond the bounds of human patience. And though he could always get a confiding and complaisant House of Commons, who would vote whatever he pleased, make whatever laws he dictated, and declare whatever he chose to be the *Constitution in Church and State*; yet the people, being always in a state of misery, were always in a state of tumult, and an incredible number of insurrections are enumerated by the historians of that reign, all originating in the grievous burdens laid upon the shoulders of the people.—Lord Bacon, who flourished  
not

not long after that period, seems particularly to have had his eye upon the events of that reign, when he gives his readers to understand, that the principal causes of troubles, seditions and insurrections, are the oppressions of unjust governments, the levying of unreasonable burdens, and the consequent depression and misery of the people.

I do not mean to say, that war is the only thing that will produce this misery. Foreign expeditions, as I have shewn you before, were not distinguishing marks of the reign of *Henry VII.* yet *Henry VII.* had the misfortune to experience a great many insurrections, during his reign. These, in part, arose from the disputed title to the throne, and partly from the oppressive measures, which ground down the faces of the poor, under the dominion of *Pitt* and *Dundas*—No, no: I beg your pardon! *Empson* and *Dudley*, I mean. They were the tax fabricators of that day.

*Empson* and *Dudley*, by their great exactions, not indeed for the purpose of splendid achievements abroad, but for the purpose of filling the coffers of the King at home, brought the people into a situation not much more quiet and tranquil than they were afterwards, in the reign of *Henry VIII.* for the griping avarice of the sovereign is sometimes as destructive to the welfare of the people, as an attachment to ruinous and ambitious wars.—But, oh, Citizens! what must be the condition of the country, if ever (which Heaven avert!) a king should grasp the British sceptre, who united both these dispositions!

Citizens, I shewed you, on a former evening, that queen Elizabeth's was also a very martial reign; and mankind, who, by a strange perversion of judgment, have always been more fond of their destroyers than of their protectors, have decorated her name with every splendid epithet. Yet, notwithstanding all these flattering titles, I have shewn you that the condition of the great mass of the people was rendered much more miserable during her reign, than it ever had been in this country before; that the increase of the price of provisions immoderately outstripped the price of labour, as it has done, more or less, in almost every reign since; but in none to such an extent as in the present. The reign of *Elizabeth*, therefore, supports the argument, that the increase of martial ambition is the increase of public calamity and misfortune; and I think we shall find that it also supports the second position, that the increase of the War system is a concomitant of the system



system of Corruption: for the reign of *Elizabeth* was not only a reign of War, but also a reign of Favouritism. It was in her reign that cabinet intrigue was first reduced to something like a system. Think of her favourites, her *Essex's*, her *Leicester's*, her train of sycophants and paramours, whose dignity and affluence were swelled by the spoils of the industrious poor; and then talk of the glorious reign of queen *Elizabeth*, if you can, without a blush.

In consequence of this organization of cabinet influence and intrigue, we find that the Commons, though not, at that time, absolutely bought up, were occasionally pretty well brow-beaten by this excellent and glorious queen and her wise and virtuous ministers. Accordingly, the reign of queen *Elizabeth* is marked by immoderate taxation, to support at once her favourites and her wars: and in the year 1597, the 9th Parliament of this great and glorious queen made a grant so exorbitant, that, having some little modesty left, they were themselves ashamed of what they were doing, and therefore tacked at the end of it an express provision, that it should never be brought forward as a precedent to justify a similar grant in future.—Citizens, they kept their word: it never was brought forward by way of precedent; but the very next Parliament, in 1602, granted supplies still more extravagant than their predecessors had been so much ashamed of, without quoting any precedent or authority whatever.

Thus, then, War and Taxation kept pace together, and immoderate burdens were laid upon the people, in proportion as what is called the *Science of Politics*, that is to say of Cabinet intrigue, became more and more digested into a regular system.

If we have instances of this so early, what shall we think of the instances that may be brought forward from more recent times? Whatever peculations might then take place, whatever burdens might then be laid upon the people, shrink into nothingness, when later examples are brought forward.

Some time ago a very celebrated and scientific character, whose name will stand recorded to the latest times, among the inventors of useful and polished arts—I mean Sir Robert Walpole—found out the art of buying every man that he chose to set a price upon. This art, or science, has since received very considerable illustrations and improvements: the whole works of that great discoverer have been published in golden characters, illustrated by a long list of noble commentators,

mentators, and particularly by those great adepts, Messrs. *North*, *Pitt*, and *Dundas*; the two latter of which may be considered as having brought the science to a state of absolute perfection. Perhaps it would be difficult for the most warm imagination that was ever heated at the Treasury fire-side, to invent any mode or manner by which Corruption could be improved to a higher degree of neatness and adroitness than they have brought it to at this very hour.

But, Citizens! Citizens! to be serious awhile, What a dreadful system is this, by which the lives, property, happiness and liberty of a great and populous nation, are put in direct opposition to the interests and personal views of those who are entrusted with the reins of government? And remember, Citizens, that to produce this direct opposition of interests, no system bears any sort of comparison with the system of Corruption! The tyrant, whose wanton malevolence destroys the ill-starred few who surround him—the wretch who, like *Nero*, gluts his appetite with the writhings and tortures of expiring subjects, though he excites our indignation, and thrills us with horror, produces but a small portion of misery in the universe, compared with the wretch who builds up a system of Corruption: for it is the nature of Corruption to undermine and destroy all virtue: it is only by destroying the moral feelings of mankind, that Corruption can possibly be supported. Add to this, Corruption seizes not upon the vitals of a few, but ravages whole generations at once; and stalking, with gigantic wickedness, from crime to crime, from pillage to pillage, from war to war, from oppression to oppression, occasions countless myriads to die with aggravated famine and calamity. Its victims fall in silence, it is true. Its tyrants are not satiated with the writhing pangs of the oppressed. But the consequences are equally certain and calamitous, and are attended with this aggravation—that the mischief done by the system of Corruption affects not only the present generation, but destroys also the virtue and happiness of unborn ages. The tyrant, in the midst of his cruelty, has no private view to serve, by the destruction and misery of any, but those who, standing near enough to become the rivals of his power, rouse his jealousy, and stimulate his fear and envy. But the murky cabin of the artizan, the mouldering cottage of the peasant, and even the field itself, feel the destroying ravages of Corruption: the whole human race are the objects of its rapacity, and the sacrifices of its inhuman system.

But,



But, Citizens, have you any doubt that this system of speculation is increased by the miseries of the people? Have you any doubt that war is necessary for the promotion of Corruption, and that public wretchedness is favourable to ministerial ambition? If you have, let us take into consideration a few facts and deductions: let us recollect that, if there is war, there must be great armies supported; if there are great armies supported, there must be a great many promotions at the disposal of the minister. To whom will this minister be likely to give those offices and promotions? To the persons who, either by individual interest, or personal connections, can best support him in power. Consequently the raising of every new regiment is so much added to *the Civil List of the Prime Minister*, whose patronage is increased, and, consequently, whose power is advanced, by this system, so ruinous to the people. Look through the naval and military departments. See how many places, preferments and situations, are in the gift of a Minister, which, but for the system of War and Corruption, we should have no occasion for whatever.

Think, then, what an host of influence this system of War, even in this one point of view, must produce. But remember that this is only a small part. War is a system which occasions a more rapid expenditure of public money. Now this public money must go either through the hands of the Minister, or the Minister's dependents: and can you suppose that it will never happen that fingers will be a little glutinous, so that some little of it will happen to stick to those fingers?—Nay, do we not know that they have their perquisites? Do we not know that the nominal salaries of office form a very small part, of the emoluments of those offices?—Hence we find that Ministers are seldom very loth to grant subsidies and *imperial loans* to any of those great and glorious continental allies, who are willing to ease us of our money.

It is very well known that *compliments* generally pass upon these occasions. When a loan or subsidy is granted, the Minister touches—half per cent. I think it is, upon all the money which his royal master, and his loyal people, in their great wisdom and benevolence, extend to these foreign potentates. The late Earl of Chatham (who, though he has political offences enough to answer for, must be admitted to be more in the habit of corrupting others, than of receiving the wages of corruption himself) magnanimously refused to receive this *douceur*, upon a subsidy paid to one of our continental

tinental allies during the last war of *George the Second*. I do not remember that any of the hired panegyrists of the day have informed us that the son has imitated the disinterestedness of the fire. But, to put this out of the question, let us call to your recollection the innumerable departments of the state in which an increased opportunity must arise, in times of war, of swelling the profits of office: let us consider the Paymasters General, the Masters of the Ordnance, the Commissioners, the Agents, and the long train of *etceteras*,—and then tell me whether you can doubt, for a minute, that the perquisites, power, and patronage of a Minister, are considerably increased by the nation being plunged into war.

Add to this, that the evident and known consequence of war is, the levying of heavy sums of money annually upon the people. Now please to remember, that this very circumstance is good for the Minister, because, *the more taxes are laid, the more tax-gatherers he must have the appointment of*; and, of course, the greater number of persons there are who think they have an interest in supporting his authority.—I pass over in silence the receivers of the ordinary taxes. I shall not call to your mind what particular individual is made receiver of such and such taxes, for such and such a district, because he happens to be in possession of a little snug borough or two, and will therefore, to secure the profits of the appointment, be sure to return three or four confiding members to parliament; or, at least, two: for he cannot be expected to serve his Majesty, who has not the opportunity of favouring the Minister with a pair of votes.

Not to dwell upon these ordinary instances, remember the long train of persons employed in receiving the Customs, the Excise duties, &c. &c. some with large, some with small appointments, but every one of whom supposes that the protection of his *property*, meaning the salary of his place, depends upon supporting the man in power, and that reformation would expose him to the loss of that upon which he weakly imagines his welfare depends: not recollecting that, but for this system of Corruption, himself, and every individual in the country, would be able to live with greater comfort, ease and satisfaction, upon one fifth part of the labour to which we are now incessantly condemned and devoted. Yes, I say, Citizens, less than a fifth part—for let any man consider how small a portion of his labour goes to his own subsistence, and how large a portion to the support of place-



men, pensioners, and other tools of corruption; and then let him reflect how blind an idiot that man must be who, for such little, paltry considerations, supports a system so ruinous to himself, to his family, and to his posterity.

I do not pretend to be financier enough to state the whole of the mischief; but I understand that Sir John Sinclair has calculated that out of every guinea a man expends, about 16s. 6d. goes in direct and indirect taxes. In short, the bread you eat has been taxed in a thousand different shapes before it comes to your hand. This is what is called indirect taxation; and the science of taxation principally consists in laying the taxes in such a manner that they should fall indirectly, not directly: for I believe it would be difficult to persuade us to pay our taxes, if the tax gatherer came for them all in a lump.

This is a circumstance well worth your observation; because the pretence made use of by the enemies of universal suffrage, is, that no man who does not pay scot and lot ought to vote: forgetting what the poorest man pays in indirect taxes. Nay, perhaps, I might say, forgetting that all taxes are ultimately paid in an indirect manner, by that very class of people whom they would thus exclude.

But, Citizens, so far is it from being doubtful that this system of war and consequent taxation increases the emolument of ministers, that a little enquiry will enable us to see that the power and patronage of ministers does more than increase in proportion to the additional taxes laid on the people: for the more taxes you lay, the more difficulty there is in levying those taxes: consequently you must not only have fresh tax gatherers to collect your new taxes, but an additional number to collect all the others: because people will of necessity make use of more artifices to evade them, and occasion so much the more trouble in the collecting. It is no wonder therefore that taxes are sometimes continued when they do not pay the salaries of the collectors.

Such being the case, we cannot wonder that ministers in the present time have grown so immoderately fond of the system of war, that they will even go to war at random as it were, and be three years in hostilities, and spend a hundred millions of British gold, and sacrifice half a million of British lives, without being able to agree what it was they went to war about. Neither is it extraordinary that ministers should be so fond of keeping in office, that when they think their power wants strengthening, they will admit any body into partner-

partnership with them rather than break up the firm. Neither is it astonishing that subtle metaphysicians and noble dukes themselves, when out of place, should be hired by a secretaryship, or even a bit of blue ribbon, to forego the empty boasts of patriotism for the solid advantages of such a partnership.

Let us then consider the progress of the emoluments of war, since the revolution in 1688, such as they appear from the circumstances already stated, and a few particular facts I am going to bring forward. That this progress must be very great will be evident at first view; for if patronage, emoluments, and dependencies arise out of all the expences of war, the more expensive the war the greater the power and patronage of the minister. Let us see then what have been the different prices which we have paid for the different wars during the last century.

In the war of *William* the Third, which lasted nine years, we accumulated an expence of

30,446,000l.

In Queen *Anne's* war of eleven years, the amount was

43,360,000l.

*George* the Second's first war, of nine years, cost the country

46,418,000l.

Six years of *George* the Second's second war cost

91,656,000l.

This second war was concluded in the present reign; and we find that in one year, that is to say, the first of his present most gracious majesty *George* the Third, we expended

19,616,000l.

Almost two-thirds of the sum expended by king *William*, in a war of nine years!!!

The American war of seven years cost 139,000,000l.

The present war of two years has cost us already 70,000,000l.

(that is to say, a sum equal to the whole expenditure of twenty years war in the times of *William* and of *Anne*) and if you go on, by the same sort of ratio, in all probability the next campaign will cost you 70 millions more. [See Note at end of the Lecture.]

To shew you that this profusion is attended with proportionate patronage, I shall take notice of a few particular branches of the public expenditure.

The first that I shall mention is the *Extraordinaries of the Army*,



*Army*, which is so notoriously an article of patronage and corruption to the minister, that it has been emphatically called the *Prime Minister's Civil List*.

The extraordinaries in *William the Third's* war of nine years amounted to - - 1,200,000l.

That is to say, per year, about 133,000l.

The extraordinaries in *Q. Anne's* war, of eleven years, - - 2,000,000l.

That is to say, annually - 180,000l.

The extraordinaries in *George the Second's* first war, of nine years, amounted to - - 3,500,000l.

That is to say, to near, per annum 400,000l.

The extraordinaries in the four first years of *George the Second's* last war - - 3,601,678l.

That is to say, in the year 1755, the extraordinaries amounted to - 504,977l.

In 1756, they amounted to - 697,547l.

In 1757, they amounted to - 1,232,369l.

And in 1758, to- - 1,166,785l.

Now please to observe that, with an exception only to the year 1758, in which the extraordinaries, of the minister's civil list, were rather lower than in 57, there is a very rapid increase, year after year: that is to say, the more years a minister has been at war, the more *thousands formerly*, now the more *millions* of patronage the minister enjoys in this branch of public expenditure.

I derive the information contained in this statement from the pamphlet entitled, "*Facts*," quoted in some former Lectures, the object of which was to shew how much more profligate and extravagant the expenditure was during the American war than at any former period. I shall make some additions to the statements it contains to shew you that the American war, in the lists of corruption, yields in its turn to the present wise and economical crusade.

In the first four years of the American war the extraordinaries amounted to - - 8,242,000l.

That is to say, to considerably more than double the expenditure of the first four years of the preceding war.—The following were the proportions.

In 1775, they were - - 845,165l.

In 1776, - - 2,170,602l.

In

In 1777,	-	-	-	-	2,200,223l.
And in 1778,	-	-	-	-	3,026,137l.

Thus in this department only, the power of corruption had increased in 23 years from half a million to three—that is to say, in a ratio of six to one; and a burden of six to one is consequently laid upon the shoulders of the people. But let us go a little farther; and we shall find that we are galloping on still faster than ever.

I have shewn you by both these statements, that every year war continues, the expenditure and consequently the patronage, increases in a greater proportion. Let us then bring the subject home, compare the second year of the present, with the second year of the American war, and we shall find that if the extraordinaries of the former amounted to 2,170,000l. those of the other amounted to 3,063,000l. Such are the growing burdens of the people—such is the growing patronage of the minister! and yet will any independent man tell me what advantage *he* expects to himself, or his family, or his posterity, from the crusade, by which this patronage, and these burdens are accumulated? Suppose this waste of British property and British blood, had been able to destroy the republican spirit in France, and restore the *Bourbons*, with all the plenitude of their power and authority, what advantage would the people of this country have reaped? Would our labour have been diminished? Would the prices of the necessaries of life have been reduced, or the wages of the husbandman been proportionately increased? Would our liberties have been more secure? Would that parliamentary reform, without which the people and their rights must sink into nonentity, have been advanced, and the free immunities of Britons been restored? in short, would either our political or our social happiness have been greater when France was bound in chains and the revolutionary principle extinguished, than at this time, when, in defiance of all the foolish factions, into which personal animosity and individual ambition have plunged them? Triumph has followed the heels of triumph, till, by the treachery of violating neutral territory (which, perhaps, is no crime at all in a regular and orderly government) a temporary check has been given to their arms.

If you look under almost all the heads of public expenditure, from which patronage can arise, you will find an increase



crease much in the same ratio. Under the article of *Bills drawn by Governors*, it has increased twelve fold. The Ordinance estimates increased, in about the same time, that is to say, from 1745 to 1780, from an annual charge of 263,000l. to 1,049,000l. and in this happy and flourishing year, 1795, they have increased to 2,231,000l. as appears from the *last Budget* of our wise and well-calculating minister.

Citizens, you will immediately perceive from these facts—and many more might be adduced of a similar kind, that while the misery of the people has been growing from these exactions, the advantages of patronage have increased four or five to one, comparatively, within these last 40 or 50 years.

If *Hume*, then, 50 years ago, thought it impossible for the liberties of the people to resist the torrent of court patronage, which the respective branches of the public revenue put into the hands of a few individuals—if he, I say, with all that penetration of mind which he possessed, and all that attachment to prerogative, conceived that the power of the crown was at that time so great, that it was impossible for the liberties of the people (without some extraordinary exertion) to survive, what is the danger at this time, when that patronage has increased to so unheard of a degree? And let me ask you whether you have not some reason to suspect that there may be individuals base and profligate enough to have made the calamity and misery attendant upon the exactions that support this patronage, a part of that system by which they hope to overthrow all that is estimable in that constitution, which they pretend to praise, but the free and valuable parts of which their actions shew they abhor?

I shall just add to the forementioned facts, that the extraordinaries of the navy, between the years 1750 and 1779, increased from 1,700,000l. to 8 millions of money: another of the excellent consequences of that scheme of œconomy which in the first speech delivered from the throne, in the present reign, we were assured should be diligently followed.

I shall now, Citizens, conclude this Lecture, with a few observations upon Commissaries and Contractors—a subject to which I wish I had strength and spirits to do ample justice. It is by no means my intention to dwell upon allusions to individuals at this time employed. It is sufficient for me to shew you the growing evil of the system: and though sometimes the remembrance of my country's wrongs may stimulate  
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me to personal allusion and reflection, I assure you it is not my wish to excite indignation against individuals. I am convinced that, if every individual you are angry with was removed, if the present system remained, however virtuous the men that succeeded to their places might be, in six weeks time they must be as profligate and abandoned as those they had ejected. A man is no more, in reality, to be considered as criminal for being brought up to the trade of a statesman, or the trade of any other species of juggling, than for being born blind or lame. It is the misfortune of his situation: and, if we accurately investigate the real history of the human mind, we shall find all that we call vice, a greater misfortune to the vicious being than to those who think they are the only sufferers. It is not therefore my desire to stimulate you to any resentment against men; and, that I may not be in any danger of so doing, in the present instance, I shall keep clear of any allusions to persons who at this time fill such offices and situations as I am going to allude to. If I shew you the system—if I shew you that a Minister will sometimes pay 200*l.* of the public money for that which he might get for 100*l.* for the purpose of serving those friends who are the necessary engines of corruption, I shall shew you the necessity of reforming that corrupt system; and that is all I wish: for, to remove the possibility of evil, is better than punishing the evil doers. I leave to those who wish to suppress enquiry, the glory of destroying all who differ from them in opinion. Let us seek a wiser method, and destroy not the vicious, but the vice. When we have done that, we have done it once for all; but if you destroy the vicious to-day, you will have the business to do again to-morrow; and like *France*, perhaps, you may be plunged five or six years in contention, and abandon at last the glorious principles for which you struggled. But if you keep your minds clear from animosity and revenge, you will attain the glorious end you have in view; you will restore the system of genuine *equality*—the **EQUALITY OF RIGHTS!** without which it is totally impossible to protect the poor from the tyranny and oppression of the rich. I would not move a finger to excite any commotion, and punish individuals; but I would strike at the system of Corruption—I would destroy the superstructure of Intrigue and Delusion, at the hazard of my life.

I shall just observe then, in a very brief manner, that, in order to support this system of War and Corruption, it has been found necessary that there should be a great number of  
intermediate



intermediate agents—that there should be a large number of persons who, from their property and other circumstances, have considerable power and influence, who should think they have an interest in this system. It is necessary, also, to have an innumerable swarm of Placemen, Contractors, Agents and Commissaries; many of whom receive the most enormous salaries, without ever seeing, or having the least opportunity of seeing, to the transaction of any part of the business of which they have the nominal superintendence.

I shall give you, from the pamphlet before me, a few instances which occurred during the American war.—“ In 1775, a Commissary was appointed, at 5l. per day, to *muster the German troops* then taken, and proposed to be taken, into his Majesty’s service.” And, to shew you that there are no more offices and appointments in these cases than are absolutely necessary, this same Commissary, and Muster-master of *German troops in America*, “ was also, at the same time, a General Officer upon the Staff in England. He was, besides, paid the contingencies as Deputy Adjutant General in the *Extraordinaries!* and in his capacity of Commissary, above 60,000l. of public money appear to have passed through his hands,” (in four years,) “ without any account or explanation whatever given to Parliament: unless it can be called a parliamentary account, or explanation, that lord North did indeed condescend to tell the House of Commons, in a mere conversation upon this subject, that *he supposed* the money might, perhaps, be applied to pay some contingencies of the foreign troops in their march to the place of embarkation.” Whether this being of a two-fold nature presided in the *real presence* in America, and the *mysterious presence* in England, or whether the real presence was in England, and the mysterious in America, I know not; for the General is incomprehensible, and the Muster-master is incomprehensible, and every thing that relates to these matters, is incomprehensible, or at least ought to be so to us of the unsanctified and uninitiated herd.—“ Another officer appears in the *Extraordinaries* to be appointed for the same purpose as the foregoing, at three pounds per day; and this gentleman also charges contingent expenses. There is also,” continues my author, “ an appointment of a Muster-master General in *North America*, who received 500l. equipage money, and 2l. per day, as we find by the *extraordinaries* for that year; and yet *he never stirred out of the kingdom.*”—Citizens, here is a long train of

of circumstances of this kind in this pamphlet, from page 73 to 82, all equally curious and interesting. These will shew you the emoluments which Ministers and their friends derive from circumstances which heap additional oppression upon the people. For can any one suppose, that even Ministers themselves would be so gratuitously profligate as to waste the public money at this rate, unless their own power, and patronage, was increased by it. Very little reflection will enable us to see it must be so increased: for the more dependants they have, the greater must be their power; and the less those persons employed in particular offices have to do, the more dependent they must be upon them for their salaries and emoluments.

Under the head of Contracts, I shall detain you with but one instance. I know that, since the time I am speaking of, a *variety of reforms* have taken place—reforms, to make use of a vulgar expression, that have stopped the spigot, and burst open the bung-hole—reforms, like that which took place at the beginning of the present reign.—The servants in the Royal kitchen were put upon board wages, that a brother Brush, or a sister Scrub, might not get a dinner at the public expence; and at the same time five or six new *Lords of the Bedchamber* were appointed, with enormous salaries; which I should suppose must have been at least five or six more old women than could possibly be wanted in any bed-chamber in the world. At least, I do not know what *Royal feelings* may be in this case; but I declare, I would rather have my bed made by an old woman of sixty, than by all the Lords his Majesty ever decorated with a title. This will shew you, that, so long as the present system continues, partial observers need not exult much in the circumstance of particular *reforms* having taken place. I know there would be no difficulty to bring you instances as glaring, from the present administration and the present war, as those I am selecting from a former time; but I think I have assigned sufficient reason why I prefer my present plan.

And now for my instance.—I shall introduce this by observing, that the writer of this pamphlet has thought proper to present us with a whole section, of seventeen pages, upon the Rum Contract made with a Mr. *Atkinson*. After exposing the carelessness and extravagant profligacy which marked the whole of this contract, the author proceeds to state, that, “At the very time when Lord *North* was agreeing with  
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“ Mr. *Atkinson*, for rum to be delivered in *Jamaica*, at 4s. 4d. per gallon,” (this will serve as a hint, how much you pay for your rum, and how much for the taxes upon it,) “ at the very time when Lord *North* was agreeing with Mr. *Atkinson* for rum, to be delivered in *Jamaica*, at 4s. 4d. per gallon, that Board [the Victualling Office] was buying *Jamaica* rum for the navy, here in *London* at the mast-head, at 2s. 2d. per gallon. This is, at the first view, half the price given to Mr. *Atkinson*: but the owner of the rum sold here had been at the charge of freight, insurance, leakage, commission, &c. to bring the rum to *England*; from all which articles of expence Mr. *Atkinson*’s rum, delivered in *Jamaica*, was totally free.”

Thus you see, Citizens, how very carefully the public money is expended. You will find, by perusing this work, that reiterated attempts were made to do the public justice in this respect, but all to no purpose. The minister defended his contractor, calling him in the debates of the House of Commons, “ his friend Mr. *Atkinson* ;” and the book of Numbers was appealed to as usual upon such occasions.

And now, Citizens, let me ask you what propriety there can be in an obstinate perseverance in a system of this description? Is it for this that the blood of your brethren and your children is to be shed? Is it for this that the peasantry of this country are to be reduced to the miserable subsistence of bread and water alone, and to be obliged to receive even a part of that from what is insultingly called charity? Is it for this that you suffer yourselves continually to be subjected to fresh burdens and impositions? Is it for this that you suffer your commerce to be stagnated, your manufactures destroyed, your arts to decline, and every peaceful vocation to be thrown aside in neglect? Is all this to be endured, that a few ministerial dependants, contractors, time-servers, monopolizers, stock-jobbers, and beings of this description, may swell to epulence, power, and grandeur, by the public spoil and ruin of the people? Yet this is all the advantage you derive from the system of war: a system without which it would be totally impossible that a few worthless beings should grasp as they do, the whole wealth of the country. Abolish then this system of war and corruption; and then may you talk indeed of the prosperity of the nation, while smiling satisfaction sits upon every countenance, and beams from every eye; though perhaps you may hear no more of that grandeur, that empty ostentation

ostentation which reduces the great mass of the people to beggary and want, and gives to those who monopolize every thing to themselves, only the melancholy opportunity of perceiving that *riches are not happiness*; that *prosperity*, as it is called, *is not felicity*; and that the only true felicity is to be sought in that path from which rapacity and ambition has drawn the rulers of the earth aside; the path of peace and benevolence, of public virtue and private justice.

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*Note.* I have said in this Lecture, (p. 117,) that if we go on with this war, in all probability the next campaign will cost 70 millions more. And in this I appear to have been prophetic: for, although shallow politicians and venal hirelings may accuse me of exaggerated miscalculation, and refer me, in support of their accusation, to that premature abortion the Minister's last budget; yet, upon close investigation, this will be found rather to support than to contradict my statement, for in the first place it is to be remembered that the 18 millions borrowed will, in reality, produce an accumulation of 30 millions of national debt—such being the usurious nature of those contracts, by which we mortgage the toil and faculties of our posterity, to support our present profligacy and mad extravagance. Add to this, that a pretty plain intimation was given by the Minister, that the Emperor (if he does not make a separate peace before we can get him to accept it) is to have another loan. Now, suppose this be only 4 millions—to be raised at an expence of something more than 7 millions of debt, this will be 37 millions; and if to this we add 15 millions more, the given amount of the taxes as estimated in the budget, there is 52 million out of the 70 already. But this is not all: the 18 (*i. e.* 30) millions above stated, is in fact a loan for six months only, as I will shew; for this 18 million is in reality borrowed, not at the end of the year, but at the end of nine months. Supposing then (as from this specimen we must suppose) that we are to have another loan at the end of nine months more, for another 18 (*i. e.* 30) millions; this will, in reality, only take us into the 6th month of the current year, and will be a positive expenditure, as to its operation, not of 70 millions only, as calculated in the Lecture, but of between 80 and 90 millions!—Can moon-struck madness itself believe that such a system can last?

HENRY



*HENRY YORKE'S SUBSCRIPTION.*

IN p. xvii. of the preface to Henry Yorke's Trial, I find the following note :

"As many reports have been circulated, respecting subscriptions raised for me, and so forth, (in order, no doubt, to connect me with party men,) I think it here my duty to declare, that a solitary 100l. is all that I have ever received to defray the expences of a trial which has cost several hundreds, and which has come entirely out of my own pocket—I hold obligation, therefore, to none—I never received a farthing (the above excepted) in the world from any man, or body of men.—I have not acted from disappointment (as some scoundrels, who call themselves Reformers, pretend); for I never solicited a place or favour in the world, nor has it been done for me by any friend. I therefore challenge all defamation, and glory in my independence. Many offers have been made to me, separately, by *individuals*, as well as to my solicitor, of pecuniary assistance : we have uniformly refused them, as unbecoming my character to receive. I would rather live upon brown bread, than forfeit, in any instance, a tittle of my independence."

This preface was, I believe, printed before Citizen Yorke had *received* the subscriptions collected at my Lecture-room, although, from the neglect of the Bookseller of whom I had ordered the Trial, it never came under my cognizance till three or four days ago. But, as it stands here as an unqualified assertion, without date or circumstance to exonerate me from a painful suspicion, the reader, I trust, will agree with me, that I am called upon, by an indispensable duty, to state the fact—*namely*—that a subscription of 10l. 17s.—collected among the frequenters of my Lectures, was paid by me into the hands of *Citizen Yorke*, a day or two after his arrival at Newgate; for which I took his receipt at the bottom of the list of subscribers, which now lays before me, and which I shall preserve for the inspection of any subscriber who may wish for satisfaction upon this head.

Beaufort Buildings,  
19th Jan. 1796.

## THE TRIBUNE, No. XL.

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*A further enquiry into the CALAMITIES produced by the SYSTEM of USURPATION and CORRUPTION. Lecture the Eighth. Containing the Conclusion of the Animadversions on the PROGRESS of the WAR SYSTEM; and a general Application of the Operation of the preceding Facts in producing the Irritation that led to the indecent Outrages committed on the First Day of the Present Session of Parliament. Delivered October 30, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

I Am this evening to finish one of the most important branches of the present enquiry; and also to conclude that part of my course of Lectures which relates to the grievances produced by erroneous systems of government.

I shall afterwards have occasion to go at large into the means by which those grievances may be redressed.

You will please to observe, that although there are certain traits of character in which all wars, at all periods, have agreed; yet there are other circumstances which make the wars of one period very importantly different from those of other times. I have marked already some of those varieties which have characterised former wars. But there is a very particular circumstance distinguishing the present war, which though in some points of view, it renders it more hateful and odious than any that have gone before, yet in another point of view, is to be considered as a kind of palliation.

The present war may undoubtedly, in a considerable degree, be considered as a war of principles: not a war of country against country, but of one set of principles against another. In short every thinking man finds his country not in

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a particular spot of land, but in the specific maxims and sentiments which he has adopted, as best calculated, in his judgment, to promote the happiness and welfare of the human race.

In this point of view, perhaps, a considerable degree of respect is due to those who have lost their lives in the present contest on either side: for though, above all things on the face of the earth, I venerate that man who, abjuring tyrannical force, submits every thing to the investigation of human reason, and abides by the ultimate decision of the majority of wills; yet, next to this man, who acts upon the true and genuine principles of philanthropy, I admire the man who maintains at the peril of his existence the dictates of his own conscience, however illuminated, or however deduced. Men are not, in general, apt to throw away their lives upon discussions of this kind without some sort of conviction. There have been (it is true) in some periods, and there are still—for the principles of the whole human race do not change at once—if they did, neither religious nor political creeds could be the sources of rancorous wars.—There have been men in former periods, and there are some, it is true, at present, who consider war as a traffic; and let themselves out to the trade of glory—that is to say, of massacre and assassination:—hired braves who glory in the livery of death, and outvie the murderers of Italy in proportion as those are greater scoundrels who destroy mankind by thousands than those whose poinards take off a devoted individual. That such men have engaged on both sides during the present contest, there can be no doubt. Soldiers of fortune will always be found, so long as war shall be considered as an *honourable vocation*.

I believe, however, that there is less of this at present than at any former period; and that the bulk of those who venture their lives on either side are sincere in their attachment to the principles they support, though their conclusions on one side must have been drawn from the examination of too small a number of facts—or, perhaps, from the early misfortune of taking for facts the dogmas and prejudices inculcated in their infancy by their grandame, their nurse, or (which is still worse) their priest.

But though in this respect, we have less abhorrence for the individuals engaged in this contest, there is another consideration which makes this war of principle more terrible and  
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more odious than any other war that can be waged. We know from the theological contests of former times—what Gibbon called “the exquisite rancour of theological hatred,” to what degree of furor, animosity, and revenge, contests arising from opposing principles will drive mankind. Nor is political enthusiasm less powerful than the religious: and, hence, the present war (on one side at least) may be considered as a *war of extermination*. It is an attempt, not to subjugate a particular country, but to exterminate all those who hold particular principles.

Citizens, there never was perhaps a greater absurdity than an attempt like this. Extermination, in any of its shapes, is not now as easy as in former centuries. There have been times it is true, when a conquering army, spreading itself like a deluge over a devoted land, massacred its inhabitants, violated their wives, and sold the children into slavery abroad, or retained them in personal bondage at home. Such was the conquest of the Saxons over the Britons, by which the very language of the island was exterminated, or, at least driven into a few barren mountains, rendered inaccessible by the kind austerity of nature, where the shattered bands opposed the fury of the invader, and preserved the scanty relics of British independency. (*See note at the end.*)

But the character of mankind is considerably altered.—Every revolution that takes place, every invention of art or science, sweeps away some traits of human character, never to be again restored. Sometimes they sweep away the good, much more frequently the odious and vile; for even the vices of revolutions, which are certainly not the least odious of all vices, are transient, while their virtues and advantages are permanently beneficial to mankind.

This change in the character of man has rendered it impracticable for the same species of extermination to take place now, as in former periods. Men go not now in whole nations or tribes to seize the land they invade, and plant their wives and families in the cultivated spots to which the barrenness of their native country has driven them. But the extermination of nations is much less difficult than the extermination of principles. Principles take a deep root, to which it is impossible to lay the axe of tyranny. That superstitious and tasteless bigot Pope Gregory, notwithstanding all the zeal and intolerance which he exercised against the works of ancient genius, found it impossible to exterminate even the



writings of *Virgil* and *Homer*, and those other poets and philosophers whom he stigmatized with the title profane. Altho' there were no opportunities of multiplying the copies of those works to the extent to which works are now multiplied, yet all the infallible power of the Pope himself could not reach those works of genius, which still, and I believe ever will be the admiration of mankind.

If the omnipotent power of God's vicegerent could not exterminate a few manuscripts, how are we to exterminate principles contained in printed books, translated into all languages, and spread over the whole surface of the earth? What government is lynx-eyed enough to search all the crevices and corners in which the books containing those principles may be hid? What inquisition is sufficiently active to prevent those books escaping its Gothic ravages? Supposing a whole nation could be put to the edge of the sword, or that 24 millions of people might absolutely be starved to death—would this accomplish the object? No, Citizens, truth when once discovered is immortal. There is no power on earth—no combination of powers that can possibly destroy the knowledge that has once been known. Not only is it "impossible for men to unknow their knowledge, or unthink their thoughts," but if you could destroy every man who has read and adopted those principles of political truth, which have thrown the tyrants of the earth into such a fever of apprehension, still the work would be incomplete; those principles, bursting with the irresistible force of truth upon new generations, would revive, and ultimately prevail. We are not, therefore, to wonder, that though the war has been carried on with such obstinacy, so little effect has been produced.

But, perhaps, the governors of the different countries, combined against the new lights and liberties of France, felt a secret conviction that these principles could not be exterminated. But they might argue thus:—though they cannot be exterminated, we may be able to over-awe the people adopting those principles, and prevent their being carried into execution. This expectation is almost as absurd as the other. What?—is it possible for a generation of men to have a deep-felt conviction of the truth of certain principles, and yet be prevented, by coercive power, from acting upon those principles? No: the history of the universe convinces us that this is totally impossible. Look back through the whole mental progress of mankind, and see if any thing like  
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it has been effected. When Christianity was opposed by the tyrannical superstitions of the ancient world, the maxims and principles of Truth and Liberty incorporated in that system—the maxims of Equal Justice, which uplifted the labourer in the field to an equality with the sovereign upon his throne, triumphed over all the fury of persecution, and Christianity was established in the midst of flames, racks, and executions, and all the cruelty of an enraged and tyrannical Aristocracy.

From this great æra, turn your eyes to more recent events of the same character. When the idolatrous superstitions and tyrannical maxims of the church of Rome, and its legion of tributary despotisms, had extinguished, for a while, the principles of Equality, which the original religion implanted, and still bears upon its page, up start the *Lollards*, *Wyckliffites*, and reformers. The fires of persecution blazed again; gibbets, and axes, and military executions, appeared in every corner. But the fires of Persecution were in reality the beacons of triumphant Truth, and Tyranny and Bigotry expired in their own blaze.

The fact is, Citizens, that the heart-felt conviction of truth inspires an enthusiasm in the human character which is perfectly unconquerable; for when a man loves his principles better than his life, he will rush forward, though thousands of deaths and torments thwart his course. This very enthusiasm not only immortalizes his name (for that were a trifle) but creates thousands and tens of thousands of admiring advocates and imitators; and his very ashes become the seeds of firm and persevering Principle, that destroy, at last, the tyranny to which he falls a victim.

But suppose, Citizens, we could admit, for a minute, that it is possible to over-awe and intimidate mankind; yet would it be impossible for the present confederacy; and for this plain reason—They are themselves not true to their own cause. The habits of state intrigue and cabinet cabal are so deeply implanted in their minds, that, though they believe their own existence at stake, yet they cannot forego the inveterate desire of outjuggling each other. They indeed profess, in their manifestoes, a great and zealous attachment to one general principle: they take care, however, not to tell you what this general principle is; and indeed, to our dim vulgar eyes, it appears as if this general principle was different in every one of those general associators. Certain however it is, that they always abandon the general for the particular interest: though  
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this, perhaps, may be considered as a proof of their consistency: For, as veneration for antiquity is part of their profession, they conceive, no doubt, that they are bound, in veneration for their royal ancestors, to keep no sort of faith or good fellowship one with the other. Thus our most illustrious brother of *Prussia*, and our most illustrious brother of *Germany*, are engaged in the same contest together, and struggling, for the love of that holy religion to which they are so sincerely attached, to exterminate French atheism, —and, for the love of that royalty to which undoubtedly they are equally attached, to exterminate the republicanism of France: yet no sooner does our brother of *Prussia* see an opportunity of overthrowing the ascendancy of our Imperial brother in the Germanic Body, but he makes a separate peace, and then attempts to grasp at the patronage of the Empire, and transplant the sovereignty from the House of *Austria* to the House of *Brandenburgh*.

Thus also we find that those great naval powers, *Spain* and *England*, pledged themselves to persevere in the same good cause. Yet *England* did not very well like that the Spanish ships should come into play, and learn a part of her naval trade; and *Spain*, jealous of the consequence of the navy of *France* being destroyed by the navy of *England*, takes the first opportunity of deserting the sacred cause, makes a separate peace, and leaves brother of *England*, and all the rest of the brotherhood, completely in the lurch.

But the most curious and the most melancholy circumstances produced by this system, is the strange and unparalleled disagreement which has taken place between the Duke of *Bremen*, the Elector of *Hanover*, and the King of *Great Britain*. These three great and mighty potentates have undoubtedly bound themselves to each other, by every tie which regular governments could devise, that they would persevere in the same principle, and abide one by the other for the attainment of the same great end. Accordingly alliances and subsidies have taken place between them, with all the necessary formalities of the diplomatic system; and the money of the King of *Great Britain* has been paid into the hands of the Elector of *Hanover*, upon condition of the Elector of *Hanover* faithfully bringing into the field the number of men of which those subsidies were the stipulated price. Yet, by and by, while the King of *Great Britain* is most steadily resolved to persevere in the present honourable,  
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glorious, and virtuous crusade, behold, the Elector of *Hanover* makes a separate peace, and the Duke of *Bremen* is appointed ambassador to treat for a general peace among all the belligerent powers.

This, Citizens, is undoubtedly one of the most lamentable circumstances which has of late years taken place, and reduces *Europe* to a dilemma in which it never stood before:—a dilemma so distressing, that I know but one possible means by which it can be got over. If the Duke of *Bremen*, in his high diplomatic character, would but entreat the King of *Great Britain* to follow the example of the Elector of *Hanover*, I am convinced that an end would be put to this unhappy difference, the political *Trinity* would once more be acknowledged in *unity*, and peace would be established in every nation of *Europe*.

Yes, Citizens, it does appear to me that the general peace of *Europe* might in this manner be preserved; because I think it has been proved, again and again, that British Gold is the cement of the confederacy—that the war, in reality, originated in the British cabinet—that the war has been kept alive by the wise measures of that cabinet, and the still more wise liberality of *John Bull*, who has parted not only with his money, but the necessary articles of his own subsistence, rather than the *sacred cause* should be abandoned. It remains only, then, for the cabinet of *St. James's* to acknowledge “that *France* is as capable of preserving the accustomed relations of peace and amity with the King of *Great Britain*, as with the Elector of *Hanover*,” and an end would be put to a war, so disastrous as to acknowledge no parallel, in all the pages of all the histories that ever were written.

But we are told that such subjects ought not to be discussed by us common folks, at this time. We are taught by ministerial writers, and particularly those oracles of ministerial wisdom, “the *Times*,” and “the *True Briton*,” that our reason was given to us for no other purpose than to be extinguished; or, at least, that the only use a man ought to make of it is, to teach him how to put his scanty bit of bread into his mouth, and how to forget that it is so scanty. Nay, those very wise and sapient writers have endeavoured to persuade us (for what falsehood, what infamous calumny have they not attempted?) that the lamentable events of yesterday (which no man regrets more than I do) have been produced by “tolerating treasonable lectures and seditious societies,” in which  
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men have impiously dared to use their reason, without licence from *Pitt, Dundas, or Portland*. But let us consider awhile the real characteristics of these melancholy events: and I give them that epithet from my heart; because it has been always a maxim with me, that the best way to secure the triumphs of Reform, is to preserve the most inviolable regard to peace and good order, and to avoid all that violence by which pretences are furnished to a corrupt and vicious administration, who want nothing but *pretences* to lay prostrate at their feet every remaining security of the people, and to establish a *military despotism*, for the support of their power, and the promotion of their aggrandizement.

If these lectures are treasonable, why does not the paragraph writer appear before the Priy Council, and *make oath* of the treason I have committed, that I may be brought to immediate and condign punishment? If the societies are seditious, why does not some one of the *best of crown lawyers* point out the act of Parliament they have violated, or the maxim of our constitution which they have trampled upon, and proceed to arraign them accordingly? But, perhaps, the crown lawyers, and writers for "the True Briton," have got a law, and a constitution, the maxims of which our ancestors knew nothing about, and which is to be found in no part of our voluminous statute-books. If they have, then, perhaps, *of their sedition, and their treason*, I may be guilty. And I will tell them something more,—that, in all probability I shall continue to be guilty; because I neither can conform to laws which I do not know, nor will conform to any laws but what have been made by legally constituted authorities.—[*A hiss; and a cry of "The gentleman wants to be enlightened? He is not yet enlightened!"*

Citizens, I have heard of some people who are born blind; I have heard of others who have been made blind by bad nurses and foster mothers; and I have heard of some other persons who have been struck blind, from having been always used to dark holes and corners, and at last coming into too much light at once. I know not to which of these three classes the Hissler may belong, or whether he comes within the description of the old adage—"None so blind as those "that will not see." But, be this as it will, I pray you, suffer not yourselves to be irritated. I am more alarmed at the intemperance of those who think themselves Friends of Liberty, than at the illiberality of those who declare themselves

themselves its enemies. Let the friends of Liberty behave with good order, and depend upon it the friends of Corruption are not many enough, in this company, to create that disorder to which they have so much inclination.

To return to my subject—Let us consider what foundation there is for the impudent assertions of those hired assassins and calumniators—(perhaps it is sedition to call the writers of “the True Briton” by their right names!)—let us see whether it is likely that political lectures, and political associations, are the causes of this phrenzy; or, whether there are not causes more powerful and evident. Let those who have been in the habit of attending these Lectures, say, whether the doctrines of Violence are here inculcated, or whether a zealous and anxious desire has not always been displayed to demonstrate the impotence and absurdity of all attempts to redress your grievances by tumultuous proceedings. Let the societies answer for themselves. I will say thus much for them, however,—that I have seen nothing in their proceedings which bore the least resemblance to encouraging violence and tumult.

The plain truth is, *Political Lectures* are not the cause of these disturbances; nor are *Political Associations*; but *this* is, in reality, the true and genuine cause:—This, Citizens, is a halfpenny loaf, purchased on the 2d September 1795, and which weighs two ounces. This, Citizens, and the political ignorance which ministerial scribblers are so desirous to perpetuate, is, in reality, the cause of all the tumults and disturbances that have disgraced this country.

Many of you remember the time, when a halfpenny roll was a breakfast for a man who had not a very extravagant appetite. What will this atom of bread do towards the poor man's breakfast now? and yet, what is the increase in the price of labour? Is it increased a fifth? Citizens, you know it is not.—There are persons who now hear me, who remember when the same quantity of table beer, which is now bought for 16s. or 18s. was purchased for 6s. and yet the father of a Citizen, now in this room, made a very handsome fortune by his brewery, at that time. Such are the consequences of the system of infamous corruption and unnecessary war, and the consequent oppression which, year after year, has been increasing in this devoted country.—Is it necessary, then, to look further for the causes why magistracy (even in its highest functions) has lost its reverence? and why an irritated and



unreflecting populace breaks out into occasional tumults and excesses?

These unhappy disorders also arise, in a considerable degree, from the infamous and slanderous misrepresentations of ministerial writers.

During the last two months, one might, from "the Times," and "the True Briton," have picked out a little volume of slanderous lies, which seem to have been written for the mere purpose of exciting tumult, and sacrificing innocent men, to promote the interest, and secure the indemnity, of a corrupt and selfish administration. Who are the men that have perverted truth, and misrepresented facts, the true statement of which is of the utmost importance to the peace and preservation of the country? The ministerial scribblers, "the Times" and "the True Briton." They are the men who, by the most gross and flagitious misrepresentations of the returns of the Corn Market, have attempted to throw the people into confusion, and persuade them, by exciting an ill-grounded suspicion against the unfortunate dealers, to destroy the mills, and break the shops of the bakers. Yet we see that the bakers, so far from making greater fortunes than they used, in many places have shut up their shops, hung them in mourning, and let their ovens grow cold, because they could no longer get a living profit.—The cause of this mischief, says the Political Reformer, is in your parliamentary *misrepresentation*—for *representation it is not*.—But no! say the writers for these ministerial prints. It is no such thing. *The corruption of the constitution is, in reality, the beauty and perfection of the constitution*; and if you destroy that corruption, and introduce reform, your King will go, your House of Lords will go: for it is only ——. Such is the conclusion from their argument!—*It is only by corruption that King and Lords can be supported!*

Citizens, if ruffians, calling themselves vindicators of the constitution, uphold doctrines like these, what is the conclusion? The plain faculties of plain working tradesmen cannot understand how deformity can be a beauty. They cannot understand how the soundness of our constitution can possibly consist in that corruption which destroys the very essence and spirit of it; and when they hear the defenders of government uphold the doctrine, that if you oppose the corruption, you would destroy King, and Lords, and Constitution, the conclusion they too unhappily and frequently draw is, that King, and

and Lords, and Constitution, must be evils: For how, say they, can that which is sound be destroyed, by destroying Corruption?—These misrepresentations of fact and argument excite the fury of the people; not the peaceful and rational argument, that it is only by peace and reform that what is good and excellent in our constitution can be preserved.

Citizens, I grow warm upon this subject. I have a deep interest in it. I have staked all that is dear in existence, and my existence itself, upon its success; and, in the ardour of passion, I forget that I am but the shattered feeble remnant of a man, partly destroyed by the corruption and wickedness of a daring administration, who, upon a charge which they knew to be groundless, crammed me into a common receptacle for the putrid carcases of felons, where my constitution was undermined, and the seeds of a disorder sown in my vitals which every strenuous exertion brings back upon me. I forget this and cannot help that warmth which exhausts my spirits. Pardon me therefore if I do not always preserve that uniformity and animation which should give life to these Lectures.

But, Citizens, there is another consideration which will shew the fallacy of these ministerial arguers in still stronger colours. Let it be remembered that the most ignorant of mankind are always the most prone to violence and commotion. Savages, who are totally destitute of cultivation, revenge every insult by murder; and attempt the redress of every grievance by war and depredation. The enlightened philosopher applies to his reason, he traces first of all the calamities, and having found out causes, endeavours to find the most lenient means of redress and amelioration. What is the savage but a man of ignorance? What is the philosopher but a man of enquiry and knowledge? Will enquiry and knowledge then make man more of a savage? or will it make him more a philosopher, and consequently a lover of peace and order?

The fact is, Citizens, that in proportion as mankind are ignorant, they are always tumultuous. In proportion as they are enlightened they are temperate and moderate in their actions; and though the vehemence of sentiment, and the ardour of social passions may sometimes transport them into warmth of expression, their hearts lose not the tender sympathies for their fellow beings, which make them regard violence as an exertion only to be appealed to for defence, not as an offensive measure. Thus the philosopher will defend his



life when attacked by savage force, but he will never himself attack with any thing but argument and investigation.

Those who belonged to no particular associations, who are too poor, too unlettered, too ignorant, and too unfortunate to be concerned in any associations of this kind, are always, in all countries, the beginners of tumult and insurrection. For when they feel the gnawing tooth of hunger at their vitals, when they see a family which ought to be a blessing become a curse, and dare not enter into virtuous union with the fair partners of their hearts, will they not thirst for vengeance? And perhaps the poorest peasant feels the fine force of love with as much ecstasy as the most luxurious noble; and when nature knocks at his heart, and he dare not open his breast for her reception—when the sympathies of youth and the delightful tenderness of passion stimulate him to an union, and he recoils from the picture of a beggared, ragged partner, and a starving brood of children, what are the emotions he is likely to feel? Will he not be indignant? Will not those tender passions yield to gloomy and ferocious resentment? and will he not, as his tumultuous revenge dictates, seize the first opportunity of getting rid of the wrath over-boiling in his bosom? though perhaps the victim of it is as much a sufferer as himself, and as ignorant of the causes of the mischief!

When the man who for 20 or 30 years has followed a thriving business, and has been getting a little comfortable support for his family, and beholds at last, by the blasting artifices of corruption, war and taxation strip him of all the gainings of former years, and throw him who has spent his life in industry and œconomy into the same situation as the drunken profligate to whom he used to make his example a lesson of morality, will he not also feel a gloomy resentment and indignant passion boiling in his breast? If so, what means have you to prevent him from insulting the laws and assaulting the magistracy under which he lives, but by political association, and the consequent argument and investigation which cannot fail of convincing him, that violence is not the way to redress: because violence can only destroy individuals, while the mischief exists not in individuals but in the system.

These are circumstances which, as Bacon has observed in a more concise, but perhaps in a more emphatic manner, are the  
the

the causes of the beginnings of seditions, troubles, and insurrections.

Who are the traitors then? The men who prevent the investigation of these causes, aggravate their tendency to mischief, widen the breach in the social system, and pour the poison of corruption into the political wound till it rankles to phrenzy and breaks forth in desperation.

These are in reality the traitors. Not the people who petition are the traitors; but they are the traitors who prevent the petition from being heard; not the people who remonstrate are traitors; but they are the traitors who pouring the unction of flattery into the ears of the Chief Magistrate, or perhaps sealing them up by court intrigue, prevent him from attending to the remonstrances of an aggrieved nation.

It is not unlikely, Citizens, that those men who have practised all these artifices lay the flattering unction to their own souls that they are in reality loyal men, and good citizens, and supporters of king and constitution; but if it had not been for the inflammation produced upon the public mind by attempting to make truth high-treason, and all argument a crime, such events as took place yesterday never could have happened.

The people of this country are not a banditti of ruffians and assassins. They are a thinking and reflecting people. But if you will prevent men from thinking, you must expect the consequences of their inconsiderate violence.

Open, open then the portals of truth; and let every man have access to the temple and peruse the volume of reason and justice. Then shall you find that men will employ their *minds* in *improving* the social condition of human nature, instead of employing their *hands* in rendering it *worse*!

Open the sluices of reform, and let the waters of purity wash away the defiling filth of corruption, injustice, and oppression. Then shall the fertilizing stream, watering the political garden of the universe, bring forth the fruits of plenty, and the blossoms of felicity; and man shall be too busy, in numbering his enjoyments, to commit depredations on the rights and happiness of others!

But if you will not reform,—I am repeating in this sentence almost the words of the father of the present minister—  
 “If you will not reform for the people in time, the people will  
 “at last reform for themselves with a vengeance;” and if they  
 should



should be driven so to reform woe to those that drive them to such desperation. Nor was this the sentiment of Lord Chatham alone. The courtly Chesterfield, struck with the prospect of the consequences of the corruptions of government, declares, that the trade of kings, priests, and lords, before the century closed would cease to be as good as they had been. Was *Chesterfield* a *Jacobin*? Was lord *Chatham* a *Jacobin*? The fact is, the strong voice of reason has been long crying out that reformation is necessary, and that nothing could preserve us from commotion but a speedy compliance with this necessity.

In short, Citizens, the maxims of political truth have been long making their way to the minds of philosophic individuals; and though few men at the first dawning of any political, moral, or physical truth, do, in reality, perceive the full length to which it will lead; yet the *principles* we are discussing are not new. The conclusions that we draw from those principles are not the invention of what is called *Jacobinism*.

But when you give to truth and justice an odious name the name ceases to be odious any longer; and *Jacobinism*, by the impolitic proceedings and persecutions of our rulers may become as honourable to those who bear the stigma, as the cross was rendered by the aristocratical tyrants and usurpers of Judea, who destroyed the great reformer of Gallilee, who first broached, in that part of the world, the doctrines of liberty and equality.

To conclude, Citizens, not they who argue are the traitors, but those who say that argument shall no longer be attended to: for this is, and always must be, the inevitable consequence—when you make it dangerous for men to argue, or to enter into peaceable associations, men of conspicuous talents will withdraw themselves, but gloomy and ignorant enthusiasts will come forward in their places, who, having no principles of justice and reason in their minds, and being debarred the opportunities of free enquiry, will present no petition but at the point of the pike, and make no remonstrance but with the battle axe in their hands.

That such calamity may never fall upon this country is the anxious wish of the man who now addresses you; and he knows no way to prevent such calamities, but by permitting free, bold and manly investigation; and changing the present borough-mongering system for a full, fair and free representation of the people in the Commons House of Parliament,

NOTE. See p. 129.

*This Lecture was several times interrupted in the delivery by an individual—not unobserved, nor entirely unknown, to the Lecturer, who, as several dirty agents of administration have successively attempted, seemed particularly desirous to excite confusion. The animadversions called forth by one of these interruptions I have inserted (p. 134.) But the argument in this place appeared too important to be so broken in upon. I have therefore omitted in the text the admonition occasioned by an interruption in this place. But as it will tend to illustrate both the views and the discretion of the the FRIENDS OF GOVERNMENT, to mark the passages at which they were most sore, it seems proper to inform the reader, that the paragraph in praise of those brave BRITONS WHO DEFENDED THEIR INDEPENDENCE among the mountains of WALES, was no sooner uttered, than it was followed by a loud, though solitary hiss. The following animadversions which this stupid illiberality occasioned will tend still farther to shew how far my manner of treating my subjects had a tendency to bring the passions of my auditors “in training for destruction,” and lamp post massacres.—*

I am very glad the gentleman took this opportunity to hiss; because it shews that he is nothing but an ignorant hireling, sent here for the express purpose of hissing. Nay, not even an hireling who could have been employed by any administration possessing three grains of common sense could be so stupid as to hiss a man for stating a mere historical fact. (*Another solitary hiss; Very loud and long indignation in the audience.—and a cry of “point him out!”*)

No, heaven forbid! Point no man out! I wish not to instigate any fury against individuals. I hope no person will notice him. I perceived from whence the illiberality came: but let it pass. Remember that the poor unfortunate being whom the calamities of the country, and the miseries produced by the present war have reduced to so abject a state of wretchedness that he could hire himself to such prostitution, is an object of your pity, not of your resentment. Such depravity ought to be an additional argument with us to persevere by manly and peaceable enquiry, for the restoration of that happiness we have lost, and that independence of soul upon which Britons once prided themselves.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Lectures of the present winter, according to my original plan, were to have been divided into three parts.—1st. On Existing Abuses.—2d. The Principles of Government; and 3d. The Means of Redress. The first of these parts may be considered as being finished; and the regular series will be found in this publication, beginning with No. XXIII. and concluding with the present Number. It pleased his Majesty's ministers to divert my attention from the other two branches of the subject by the introduction of a bill into parliament, one half of which, I was at first weak enough, or vain enough to imagine was framed for the express purpose of stopping my mouth. Upon more minute investigation however, I find that from this suspicion of personality, *envy*, and injustice, they must be entirely exonerated—for though they have, in kind anxiety, I suppose, for my reputation, and to preserve me from “the tediousness of a thrice-told tale,” forbidden me to repeat that part of my subject which I had finished, they have not forbidden me from proceeding with that still more important part which I was about to begin. The *Principles of Government* it is not yet unlawful to discuss, either in Lecture or debate, as I shall demonstrate in my PROSPECTUS, to be published on the first of *February*, and by a course of 20 Lectures which I shall begin upon *Ash Wednesday*, and conclude upon *Good Friday*.

In the mean time I shall proceed with the publication of my *Miscellaneous Lectures* in the following order.

First—The ensuing Number will contain the Lecture on the Revolution in 1688; and will be followed by the two Lectures delivered during the former season, but not yet published, on the *Unfortunate Restoration of the House of Stuart*.

Second—The three Lectures on the Anniversaries of the Acquittal of T. Hardy, J. H. Tooke, and the Lecturer: and

Third—The Lectures delivered during the discussion of *Mr. Pitt's* and *Lord Grenville's Acts*.

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XLI.

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THE LECTURE *On the REVOLUTION in 1688.*  
*Delivered on the ANNIVERSARY, Wednesday,*  
*November 4th, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

YOU assemble this evening to commemorate one of the most important events that have taken place during the whole period of British history: this being the anniversary of the landing of king *William* in this country. You are not, however, to suppose that it is my intention to entertain you with a long panegyric upon the character of the *Prince of Orange*. The fact is, Citizens, that I am but a lame sort of an orator at panegyric: nor have I yet found many instances, in the lists of royalty, that are calculated to inspire the enthusiasm necessary to make panegyric palatable to the hearer. And when I consider *William III.* in his individual capacity, I am not inclined to bow down with much more implicit veneration to him, than to his predecessors, or some of his successors.

*William III.* undoubtedly was the instrument of a very important change in the affairs of this country: a change in some respects very excellent; in others, I will have the boldness to say, unfortunate and erroneous. *William III.* also, makes a very conspicuous figure in the history of *Europe*: and there can be no doubt but that there were many traits of greatness in his character. But, as it happens that all men have their defects as well as their virtues, so it happens, also, that a person does not cease to be a man when he becomes a king.

I think I observe certain parts of the character of this hero which do not entirely justify all the applause and approbation which party men have sometimes lavished upon him. Be this, however, as it will—be his virtues or his defects whatever they may, we do not assemble to discuss the merits of men, to extol individuals into *demi-gods*, and then fall down



and *worship the idols we have set up*; but, to pay our devotions to the divinity of **PRINCIPLE and TRUTH**—a divinity of more real value than all the pageants that have ever strutted before our eyes, for their own gratification, and the terror of their oppressed and deluded worshippers.

I conceive that, in the present æra, few persons can be found, in any country, who are extremely anxious about the *name* of their chief magistrate; or who bow down with implicit veneration to one family, in preference to another. We shall therefore, I dare say, entirely agree with that sentiment, so ably supported a session or two ago in the House of Commons, That we should have been totally inexcusable, if we had spent the blood and treasure of this country, at the period of the Revolution, for no other purpose than to pluck down one race, and set another in its place. It was for Principle we were contending—or else we were contending for nothing; for it is only by an amelioration of the principles upon which government is conducted, that any advantage can be communicated to the people: and if we plunged into tumult from any other motives whatever, we should lack that good understanding which an ancient fabulist gives to the *ass*, who, when the trumpets were sounding from the walls on one side, and from the invading army on the other, was conjured by his master to quit this field, lest he should fall into the hands of the enemy. “What, master,” says the *ass*, with eloquent brevity, “if the enemy should take me, will he put three panniers upon my back?”—“No:” replies the master, “your back is only made for two.”—“Why, then, I carry two already,” replied the logician, “and it is matter of very little consequence to me, whether I carry your panniers, or another man’s!”

It was for principle, then, that our ancestors contended, at the Revolution in 1688. It was for principle that they plucked down the house of *Stuart*, and exalted, first the house of *Orange*, and then the house of *Brunswick*, to the throne; because they entertained a zealous and virtuous expectation that those houses would be instrumental in supporting those principles which the detestable *Stuarts* endeavoured to annihilate and overthrow.

Such, I believe, were the feelings that actuated the worthy part of the leaders of the famous Revolution: and by this Revolution there were accordingly principles established, which must for ever be dear to the hearts of Britons. By  
this

this Revolution was overthrown the absurd and ridiculous doctrine of "the right divine of kings to govern wrong;"—by this Revolution was annihilated the pretence that *kings are God's vicegerents*; that from heaven they derive their authority, and are responsible for the exercise of it to heaven alone. By this also was established another principle, glorious and important to the last degree!—a principle which, though the advocates of Corruption would destroy all the conclusions which result from it, and all the benefits to be derived from it, yet, in reality, they do not dare openly to disavow! namely, that *the sovereignty of every country is, imprescriptibly, and inalienably, in the people*; and that therefore they must at all times, as they have the power, have the right, also, when their own preservation makes it necessary, to exercise *the sovereignty, delegated, but never absolutely given away*, because given away it cannot possibly be.

I know, Citizens, that this is a language unpleasant to courtly ears. This is one of the truths which, though *Blackstone* and other sycophant writers have been obliged to acknowledge, yet at the same time they would fain persuade us, ought never to be propagated to the people; upholding thereby the old ridiculous maxim by which all the barbarous and destructive superstitions upon the earth have been supported, that those who have intelligence are to use, or rather to abuse, that intelligence, to the excellent, beneficent, and just end, of keeping all mankind besides themselves in ignorance:—in short, in misleading the multitude by phantoms, while they grasp to themselves the solid and substantial benefits of this world.

By this Revolution was also established the principle, which has since been trumpeted forth by that learned authority the Lord Chief Justice *Eyre*, that the sovereignty must always be exercised for the happiness and welfare of the people; and that it is only for the welfare, happiness, and protection of the people, that any sort of power or consequence should be delegated, even to the chief magistrate himself.

Such principles it is glorious to see acknowledged by the acts and deeds of great nations, and stamped with the seal of historical authority. It is glorious to live at a period when events have taken place, which no one, without proclaiming himself an enemy to the constitution of his country, can pretend to stigmatize, that render these principles incontrovertible! From this principle resulted another, at once demon-



strated and exercised by the Revolutionists of 1688, namely, the right of the people, whenever their happiness is invaded, their liberties are trampled upon, and their security is attacked, of recurring to their natural sovereignty, and changing the government which no longer pays respect and veneration to their rights and happiness.

Is there a man who will be bold enough to say, that this is not a *right of Britons*? Is there a man who will be bold enough to say, that this is not a fundamental principle of the British constitution? If there is such a man, will he also be bold enough to take to himself the consequences which result from that denial? Let him recollect, that thereby he slanders the Revolution, calls *William III.* a usurper, upholds the divine right of the house of *Stuart*, proclaims, in fact, that the poor dreaming old woman of a Cardinal at *Rome* there—"Cardinal of *York*," I think they call him—is King of this country; and thus, as far as is in the power of words, commits high treason against the house of *Brunswick*, now established on the throne: for there are but two possible means by which any government can pretend to have been established. Either it must have been by hereditary right, tracing that right to its fountain, in divine appointment; or else it must rest upon the foundation of human right. And what is this foundation of human right, but the congregated voices of human beings, proclaiming the conviction of their understandings, and the decision of their wills?

Here, then, I think I may rest, with justice and propriety, as upon a pillar of adamant, the admiration which I pay to the Revolution in 1688. Upon this foundation, as upon a rock, I build the fabric of my attachment to the principles of that Revolution: and it is upon this foundation alone that I can possibly be said to be a supporter of the house of *Brunswick*, or an advocate for the title, by which, *under certain conditions*, the descendants of that house still hold the crown. I say, *under certain conditions*: for when the people of this country changed the line and regular succession of their government, they adopted, *under certain restrictions and regulations*, a fresh hereditary succession. Mr. *Burke*, indeed, tells us that, at the period I am now speaking of, the people of this country (that is to say, the CONVENTION which placed *William III.* upon the throne, and passed the Act of Settlement, by which the present family have happily succeeded) did thereby give and bequeath, decree, make over, and

and renounce, with all the legal formalities, which, if it were worth while to take up your time, it were easy to enumerate, all the rights, privileges, and immunities, of the people of this country; from thenceforwards, and through all successive generations. So that, according to Mr. *Burke*, the Revolution in 1688 was not a glorious revolution of Liberty, but an odious and detestable revolution of despotic, arbitrary, and tyrannical Usurpation, annihilating, at one stroke, the natural, and theretofore constitutional liberties, not only of the people, but of their children, and their children's children, through all successive ages: Britons having lost thereby the right of human intellect; and being condemned to hug their chains, and bless the hand that bound them.

But by what right, let me ask you, did the Convention of 1688 exercise the authority which they then did exercise? or by what right could they exercise the authority which *Burke* tells us, falsely, they attempted to exercise? Whatever authority they exercised, I conceive, must have originated, in this, as in the former case, either from a divine right, or else from a human right: that is to say, they either exercised this right by divine inspiration, or else they exercised it by that sort of privilege which every human being necessarily bears about him—the privilege of humanity, to which he is born, and for which, as *Paine* most emphatically expresses it, “his person is his title deed.” Now, if they exercised it by divine right, how came they to pretend to pull down the doctrine of divine right? Upon what better foundation did they build the divine right of the Convention, than their opponents built the divine right of the house of *Stuart*? Or, were there two divine rights—a sort of polytheism in politics? and did the two divine rights buffet one another, like Homer's gods, to decide to which the sovereignty should belong?—If, on the other hand, their power originated in human right, (that is to say, the right of that intellect which man possesses) then it inevitably follows, that the right they possessed to alter the settlement, and correct the institutions of their ancestors, must have devolved to their successors, to alter their settlements, and correct their institutions: for if I had a right to undo what my father had done for me, certainly my children must have a right also to undo that which I do for them; or else you must admit this absurdity, that there is a particular period of time at which human nature arrives at unalterable perfection, ascertainable and demonstrable to the common



common understandings of mankind, and that the Revolution having taken place at this precise moment of absolute perfection, our ancestors had a consequent right to bind, in the chains of their infallible determinations, us and our posterity for ever.

In short, there is so gross and palpable an absurdity in supposing that Englishmen, in 1688, had a right to recur to first principles, and that Englishmen, in the year 1794, have not a right to the same recurrence, that it does not deserve any serious examination. Nay, our ministry themselves, who are incessantly abrogating old laws, and making new ones, (nay, who, as it were easy to prove, arrogate to themselves a right and power of altering the constitution of the country) do themselves overthrow the arguments of Mr. *Burke*, and prove that, according to their judgment at least, one generation of Britons have a right to undo what another generation had done for them; and that they have not inalienably resigned all pretensions to the right of making new provisions, according to the exigencies of the times.

Either upon these principles, then, of inalienable right, or else upon no principles at all, the Revolution in 1688 was established. And if we appeal to the writers who stepped forward to vindicate that Revolution, and to the arguments adduced by its supporters, we shall find that they all of them lead us to conclude, that it was upon those principles that the Revolution was effected. Whether you appeal even to *Blackstone* himself, who certainly was not exceedingly anxious to propagate doctrines of Liberty and Equality, or to any author who has written in vindication of the Revolution, you will find these principles, either explicitly laid down, or clearly inferred. In short, the greatest advantage resulting from that Revolution is, that it paved the way for the fair and manly discussion of principle: it broke through the chains and fetters which the despotism of the *Stuarts* had attempted to impose upon the powers and intellects of men, and laid open the field of political discussion, by which the reasoning powers have been increased, the understanding improved, the human character lifted to more exalted excellence; and from which, I make no doubt, a degree of happiness, virtue, and liberty, will ultimately triumph throughout Europe, which will cast at the most humble distance every thing that has yet entered into the imaginations of those who have been honoured as wise legislators—the best benefactors of mankind!

Upon

Upon such principles then—the principles of the RIGHTS OF MAN—the principles of Justice, of humane and liberal Equality, was the Revolution in 1688 founded. Upon such principles was *William III.* placed upon the throne of this country; and happy would it have been for the present, and for all preceding generations, if such excellent and firm provisions had then been made as would have prevented usurping and ambitious ministers, by a system of corruption, at any future period, from violating those principles, and pilfering from the people the happiness and advantages which those principles were intended to communicate and insure. But unfortunately, at the Revolution in 1688, one thing, necessary for the security of all the rest, was neglected; namely, a full and fair reformation in the Commons House of Parliament. Hence it is that, though excellent provisions were made, and excellent principles laid down, (in terms rather vague and indefinite, it is true) relative to the restrictions upon the executive branches of the government, yet these principles and provisions, being left to no better guardianship than a representation, open to all the usurpations of Boroughmongering Corruption, have not produced the effects intended.

It is true, that a provision was made to secure the people from the mal-administration of the executive power, by rendering the ministers and advisers of the crown responsible for every measure that should be adopted. This provision was made by the 12th *William III.* chap. 2. in these words:—  
 “ All matters and things relating to the well-governing of  
 “ this kingdom, which are cognizable in the Privy Council  
 “ by the laws and customs of this realm, *shall be transacted*  
 “ *there*; and all resolutions taken thereupon *shall be signed by*  
 “ such of the Privy Council as shall advise and consent to the  
 “ same,” thereby, as it was observed in the speech of Mr. *Wharton*, from which I quote this clause,—“ thereby guard-  
 “ ing, as far as laws could guard, against *that accursed engine*  
 “ *of Despotism, a CABINET COUNCIL, or that more ac-*  
 “ *curved engine of Tyranny, an interior Cabinet!*”—a secret  
 spring, or wheel within a wheel, by which the operations of government are with impunity misdirected, to the advancement of the individual power and ambition of particular men, and the destruction of the rights and happiness of the whole. At the same time, our ancestors “ proceeded to establish the  
 “ principle of *fair, and free, and frequent* election of the re-  
 “ presentatives of the Commons House of Parliament, as  
 “ may



" may be seen by a reference to the acts passed in the first, " second and third years of *William and Mary*," But unfortunately, *fair*, *free*, and *frequent*, are words which may very frequently, though not very fairly, be applied to any meaning which interested individuals choose to put upon them. A parliament elected once in seven years, is a parliament *frequently* culled, in comparison of one that shall be elected for seventy ; and a parliament that has no other sort of coercion on its mind than the coercion of Corruption, may be considered, perhaps, by some, as *free*, compared with the parliament that shall be absolutely under the controul of a military despotism. Nay, a parliament may, by some, be supposed a *fair* parliament, that fairly represents all the proprietors of rotten boroughs throughout the country, although the voice of the people should be no more heard within that assembly, than it is in the divan of Turkey.

Citizens, if we peruse the boasted acts and institutes of this country, from *Magna Charta* to the present time, we shall be obliged to acknowledge that one of these two circumstances had a considerable share in framing all these instruments: Either the persons who occasioned them to be drawn up and adopted, were so eager to obtain the acknowledgment of a principle, that they neglected the means by which the enforcement of that principle could be secured; or else they only meant to " cheat the deluded people with a " shew of Liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of," and every precaution for securing the realization of which they therefore criminally neglected: for though we find innumerable declarations about free, and fair, and equitable distribution of justice, we seldom or ever meet with any sort of definition of the meaning which those words ought to convey, and the manner in which the advantages of them are to be secured.—When you tell me I shall have a fair trial, the judge, who is to decide upon my fate, will be sure to tell me that my trial has been exceedingly fair; and therefore, by so declaring, you in reality declare nothing at all.

I remember, Citizens, when *Reeves*—the Association Reeves, I mean—the busy-body fellow there, who has been politically defunct for some time, but whose ghost, of late, has begun to stalk about the streets, in the semblance of a *wild Indian*, with a " tomahawk " in his hand, hewing down every thing civilized and liberal that comes in his way!—when this Reeves, in his political life-time, wanted

to

to iudict me, forsooth, for keeping a *disorderly house*, and he thought the fairest way was to try me in my absence, without letting me know that I was accused. I happened, however, to hear of the proceedings, and I went accordingly into the court, where he sat as High Steward and Judge of that sublime district, called "the duchy of *Savoy*, part and parcel of the duchy of *Lancaster*." I heard the jury very formally sworn, and I heard the witnesses very formally sworn, also; after which it was thought very fair, that the witnesses and the jury should be sent out together into an adjoining room. Not understanding that mode of trial, I thought it might be fair to ask for a little explanation: so, "Mr. Chairman *Reeves*," said I, "am I not to be permitted to call witnesses also?"—"Who are you, Sir?" said he, pursing up his eyes. "My name is *Thelwall*."—"O! very well, Sir! Do not trouble yourself! I will take care you shall be *fairly* dealt with! You shall have compleat and full justice, depend upon it! You may rely upon me for that!"

Now, I own I am not very fond of relying implicitly upon any man; and to tell you an honest truth, Mr. High Steward *Reeves* is the last man in the world I would rely upon, if I wanted justice. Nor did his conduct, in this respect, mend my opinion. "May I not also call witnesses?" I repeated.—"No, Sir, none." "May I be permitted to speak in my own behalf?" "Not, by *Counsel*, Sir." "May I in my own person?" "Not to any length, Sir. After the verdict, you may address ME!"—So I was first to be tried and cast, and then, after the verdict was brought in against me, if he could have found a jury to make themselves so ridiculous, I was to enjoy the honourable British privilege of making a supplicatory address to Mr. Steward *Reeves*, to beg he would not put too heavy a fine upon my little weak shoulders. Now this, in the duchy of *Savoy*, part and parcel of the duchy of *Lancaster*, may be called a free, fair, and full trial: but from such trial, kind stars deliver us! In short, if legal and constitutional provisions are intended to be of any use to the people, it is necessary to have them explicitly declared, and guarded by some pure depository, subject to no influence but that of the people themselves. The declaration of the right of free, fair, and frequent parliaments, might be made with a very fair and honest meaning; but our ancestors were mistaken, if they expected any solid advantage from a principle so vaguely laid down, and so weakly guarded: and though a triennial bill



was afterwards passed, the persons elected under that bill, took it into their heads to vote that the country was in danger, and that therefore they, and all persons elected after them, should sit for seven years, instead of three. So you see that one of the things taught by the practice of this free, full, and frequent representation, is, that if you are delegated by any particular person to transact any particular business for him, the consequence of such delegation is, that you may snap your fingers at him when you please, and, by authority of your own vote and determination, continue to transact business *in his name*, but *for your own advantage*, so long as it shall accord with your own will and pleasure. A smooth way of settling business this. The aristocracy of the Royal Exchange like it very well in politics, perhaps; but I wonder how they would like it in their own counting-houses! But they will tell you, perhaps, politics are of less concern than settling the business of their counting-houses: for if any defalcation took place in this respect, their great and wealthy families, who reside in palaces, and ride in gilded coaches, would be ruined; while political defalcations only affect the base and servile multitude—a set of beings upon whom such great characters ought not to humble themselves so much as to cast away a single thought.

Another provision made at this Revolution is also excellently attended to, (*to wit*) that “no person having any place of profit under the King, or receiving a pension under the Crown, shall be capable of serving as a member of the House of Commons.” This provision is made in very explicit terms: but where are the restrictions for preserving its inviolability? And mark, Citizens,—if you do not guard your principles in a firm and manly way—if you do not, in clear and decided terms, lay that principle down, and fortify it by explicit, unequivocal, clear and determinate laws, it is a matter of no consequence what provisions you make, relative to the subordinate branches of your government and legislation. If your principle is loosely guarded—if your foundation is corruption, the whole of the superstructure is in reality nothing more than an ill-jointed mass of ruinous materials piled together, but neither cramped nor cemented, and which those who have an interest in its destruction, can push down, and hurl into the dust, whenever they have planned, in their own imaginations, an edifice more favourable to their own power and grandeur, to erect upon its ruins.

How

How many of the 558 representatives of the people who now have an honourable seat in *St. Stephen's Chapel* would be left there, if every man who has place, pension, or emolument from the court were taken out of it? I am prepared to decide how many would be left; but I remember meeting with an instance, some little time ago, of a motion for an enquiry into this subject, which was lost, *of course*, by a very large majority; and when it came to be sifted, who were the persons that voted with the minister, it was found that there were but nine in that whole majority, that could have sat in the House of Commons, if this provision of the glorious revolution had been attended to.

Another provision was, "That Juries should be fairly taken without partiality, and should act freely without influence." 1st W. and M. c. 2. But, Citizens, here too, unfortunately, we have some neglect to complain of in those who framed the provision. Juries, say they, shall be taken impartially: but have they secured the manner in which that impartiality may be guaranteed. It is true, in the most grand and important instance, some excellent provisions have been made to counteract the tricks and artifices that may be used to pack juries, and make false pannels: but speaking generally how are you assured that your juries are thus fairly and impartially taken? Who takes them? and how are they taken? Are the whole of the persons capable of being called upon juries put upon separate ballots, hustled well together, and taken out promiscuously, in the broad eye of day, where every body can see that there are no tricks played? or are the lists, in reality, made out by persons who are the nominees of the minister, and dependant upon him for the honours of knight-hood or other benefits, real or supposed, which may be obtained by taking care not to offend persons in power?

Citizens, I could a tale unfold, relative to tricks and artifices frequently played upon jurors—I could mention to you facts innumerable that would shew you the horrible influence frequently exerted. I could give you the names of jurors who have not only been tampered with before trials came on, but have afterwards been discarded by great families for pronouncing verdicts according to their consciences. But it is not necessary to dwell upon this subject—for, thanks to the enlightened spirit of Englishmen, thanks to that manly intrepidity—that determinate and honest principle, which even ministerial corruption and cabinet intrigue cannot extermi-



nate from British breasts, in defiance of all the machinations of courts, when great and important questions come to the decision of 12 plain simple men, whatever influence may have been used, whatever arts of seduction may have been practised, whatever interests they may appear to have, they will say by their conduct—Are the liberties of our country—are the lives of our countrymen at stake? We care not for your influence. We will pronounce a bold, honest and manly verdict, according to the conviction of our consciences; and prove that we are not to be made instruments for the destruction of that freedom we were impannelled to defend.—When I come to speak on the next evening upon the event in which the original of that picture is so deeply interested (*pointing to the portrait of T. Hardy*) and in which you were I believe, scarcely less deeply interested yourselves, I shall have an opportunity of expressing my thoughts more fully upon the subject of British juries, and therefore it is not necessary to dwell longer upon it now.

Another of the provisions made was that “*excessive bail*” should not be required; that *excessive fines* should not be imposed; and that *illegal and cruel punishments* should not “be inflicted.”

Now, Citizens, we can all of us, I dare say, form some kind of idea, in our own minds, what excessive bail is; When we hear that in the case of *Eaton*, bail was demanded to the amount of 2,000*l.* for publishing a story about cutting a cock’s head off—when you find innumerable instances of the same kind which I could mention to you, you will be inclined to think these instances of excessive bail. But how can you prove, in a court of law, if you should come to act upon the principle of responsibility, that they were excessive. The judges who demanded such bail never thought it excessive, of course. I dare say, they will tell you, that they were excessively moderate, and considering the enormity of the crime of guillotining a game cock, even in a speech or a story-book, it is surprisingly lenient that the publishers of such stories should be suffered to be bailed at all.

You may also have some ideas about excessive fine;—and when a man has a fine imposed upon his shoulders, much greater than himself and all his connections together were ever worth, you may think this perhaps *excessive*, inasmuch as it could be imposed for no other purpose than inflicting that which the law and constitution of this country expressly prohibits,

hibits, perpetual imprisonment. But how will you prove this excessive? I dare say the Attorney or Solicitor-general could either of them make a speech of from nine to fourteen hours to prove that there was no sort of excess in it; and that any man that should dare to talk of "German hog butchers," or any thing of this description, ought to be so fined; and that it was very kind, moderate and merciful indeed, that he was not hanged, drawn and quartered at once. You have also some idea, perhaps, about cruel punishments; and you would think it a cruel punishment, I suppose, to transport a man for 14 years to *Botany Bay*; to tear him from every connection of his heart, and every friendly feeling, and send him in fetters, like a felon, to those inhospitable regions, for having dared to explain what the constitution of the country was under our Saxon ancestors, and contended that if our ancestors had a right to improve upon the constitution of their ancestors, we have a right to improve upon the law and constitution of our ancestors also. But I dare say the *Lord Justice Clerk*, and all the other virtuous, upright, pure and enlightened judges of the *Court of Justiciary in Scotland*, could bring forward demonstrative arguments to prove that it was no cruelty at all—but on the contrary that it was mildness, mercy and moderation, prevented them from hanging the culprits up like dogs!

In short, Citizens, mere vague terms are nothing. When principles assume the garb of law and constitution, every thing should be so clear, so perspicuous, that there should be no possibility of misinterpretation: because the men who have the power of interpreting are the very men who have also an interest in perverting the laws: or who at least will continue to think that they have such interest, so long as vain and deluded man shall suppose that there is more happiness in tyrannising over his fellow-beings, than in promoting their liberty and advancing their happiness.

Another provision of this revolution was, that "thenceforward the Judges commissions should be made to be held so long as they should worthily deport themselves; and that their salaries should be ascertained and established:" in order that they might be rendered independent of the Crown. But Citizens, who was to decide upon this worthy deportment, the People, or the Crown? and what avails the determinate salary of the judge, if that judge can have a pension, sinecure, or other emoluments held at the will of the king



king or his ministers, in addition to this acknowledged salary? What become of the settled limits of this salary, if his boy of nine years old, or his infant in leading strings, can have places conferred upon him of many thousands per year?

We have heard, it is true, of very fine things about the step that was taken at the beginning of the present reign, to increase the independence of the judges. But while corruption is at the helm, reform may be pretended, but real improvement can never be produced. The circumstances above alluded to render it impossible that any thing like independency should exist upon the English bench; and a historian of the present reign, has placed in a proper point of view the fallacy of this pretence.—Decadery Hist. of Geo. III. vol. i. p. 81. "*Though the commissions of the judges continued in force, during their good behaviour, yet, like all other civil officers holding of the crown, they were obliged to renew their commissions, at the accession of every new sovereign: a circumstance, which plainly indicated, that their power expired at the demise of the crown. At the instance of the sovereign, who was willing to lay some foundation for popularity, an act was passed, by which their commissions and salaries were secured from any accidents, but their own misbehaviour or death. Had the quantity of their appointments been fixed, and not been left to the caprice of the ministry, there would have been more ground for applauding this as a patriotic step. Their independency would have been perfectly established, nor could they, like the lord Chamberlain, or the master of the horse, be considered as servants of the crown, but of the public. But this parliament was too courtly to go a single step beyond the orders received from above, or to pretend to rectify any defect, in a proposal sanctified by the royal name. The consequence is that our present judges discover no more independance than those of former periods.*"

Citizens, it is in this courtliness of parliament that the calamity rests. The defect of the revolution consists in the unhappy neglect of purifying the representation in the Commons House of Parliament. If this representation had been purified—if the original constitutional principle of the country had been appealed to—if annual election and universal suffrage had been secured to the people in such terms as set all subterfuge at defiance, whatever corruptions or errors might have crept into the administration of the law, or into any

ny other department, in consequence of the vague manner in which certain provisions were worded, would have been removed, as fast as the evil had made its appearance: because then the interest of the representatives and the interest of the people would have been one; and elections would have returned so frequently, and the number of electors would have been so great, that corruption could not have been practised, nor artifices found out by which those two interests could have been put in opposition to each other. All that we want for the security of our happiness, all that we want for rendering perfect the work that our ancestors began would be accomplished, if this were in reality adopted. If annual election, and universal suffrage purified the fountains of legislation, then should we find that those general axioms which declare such excellent principles, would soon be followed up by other provisions, which would render it impossible that those principles should be abandoned.

If at the period of the revolution this reformation had taken place, no member of the House of Commons could have had an opportunity of standing up in that assembly as MR. (once CITIZEN) WHARTON did, to declare "that this *provisional* " *responsibility* of the Privy Council no longer remains; that " the election of the House of Commons is *neither fair nor* " *free, nor frequent*; that this provisional independence of " its members is gone, and that the House at present *swarms* " *with persons having places of profit under the king, and* " *receiving pensions from the crown*; that *juries are not fairly* " *and impartially taken*; that *they do not act freely and with-* " *out influence*; that *excessive bail may be and has been required*; " that *excessive fines may be and has been imposed*; that *illegal* " *and cruel punishments may be and have been inflicted*; and " that *the Judges are not independent of the Crown*; that " pensions may and have been granted to some of them, " and that lucrative offices may be and have been conferred " upon others; by which means it cannot be said that their " salaries are ascertained and established."

Citizens, Citizens, you have a House of Commons whose clerk has been obliged to register the motion made in consequence of this declaration upon its journals—a motion which proves—incontestably proves how necessary a reform must be in that House; since, though not one soul stood up to contradict a fact so clearly, so boldly, and so positively stated, or who had a word to say against the truth and justice of either  
his



his arguments, his assertions, or his conclusions, yet but 14 persons were found to countenance the enquiry, which a charge so serious and so important required. All, all almost lifted up their voices to scout and discard a motion whose truth they knew, and whose investigation they dreaded!

You have a House of Commons that has also been obliged to register upon the same journals, an express declaration that "seats in that house are bought and sold as notoriously as standings for cattle at a fair." You have a House of Commons I say that has been obliged thus to record upon its own journals the public avowal of its corruption; and yet you have in that house men who have the effrontery to bel- low out persecution, death, and destruction to all who dare up-lift the manly voice of reason, and say to the promoters of this corruption—ye deluded rulers of the land—ye infatuated men, whither are you driving? Will you plunge the people of this unhappy country still deeper and deeper in the abyss of ruin, by your corruption? and will you not, at least from prudence, if not from principle, awake ere it is too late, from the heedless trance in which your luxury and rapacity have plunged you? Will you not remember that, though philosophers may reason, though enlightened men who feel for, and understand the real happiness and welfare of their country, may wish to use the force of argument alone—though those persons who really understand the principles of liberty may abhor and detest all violence, that all men will not be philosophers; and that passion and misery may thwart the benevolence of enlightened philosophy. If you will be going on at this rate, regardless of the manly voice of reason and exhortation, think—think at least of the danger there is, that a frantic, uninformed, and deluded multitude, may attempt by violence that which nothing but reason can accomplish, and thereby plunge both themselves and you into miseries, at the very contemplation of which the heart of every virtuous man drops tears of blood! "For my own part, Citizens, I declare from the bottom of my soul I abhor and detest all tumult and violence; I wish for peaceful reform—I wish the happiness of my fellow-beings—and if I knew the violence which I could stop, if I knew the projects of a tumultuary nature which, at the hazard of my life, without abandoning my principles, I could prevent, I would face all dangers to prevent such rashness. I not only wish for reform by peaceable means only; but I am convinced that violence, tumult,

tumult, and insurrection, would give pretences to ruffians, who only want pretences, to rob us of the little liberty which remains; and establish the full dominion of their tyranny over us.

These declarations, Citizens, these principles spring not from fear of danger. The most violent ruffians scorn not death with half that firmness with which the genuine philanthropist despises it; and I flatter myself, though I am small and weak in frame, though I have none of those gigantic proportions which distinguished the fabled heroes of elder times, that the spirit within this breast shall never abandon the principles of liberty, and that torments and death shall not drive me from the cause of reform, of justice, and virtue. But though we despise the violence that may be exercised against us, let us use no violence against others. Let us exert our reason—let us endeavour to rouse the torpid energies of intellect, not the violence of insanity. Let us endeavour to convince our countrymen, that they must have reform or they must be ruined. Let us shew them that disease and famine are grinding the entrails of those from whose industry we derive every comfort and enjoyment; and let us call upon those who from intellect or situation are able to push forward the cause of reform, to join heart and hand in a work so virtuous and so noble. If these things are treason, bring your axes, your gibbets, your executioners, we shrink not from your vengeance—we defy your power.

These are, I believe, the principles of genuine liberty—these are the feelings of real heroism. Let me then, though I would rouse your ardour, persuade you to adhere to the principles of reason, not to seek redress by tumult, and commotion. A few unlettered and uninformed men, who have never had the advantages of political cultivation, have already furnished some pretexts to ministers to execute views and objects which, without some such pretence, they would not have dared to attempt; and already is the Tomahawk of tyrannic faction uplifted against us: nay, at this very moment, while we are assembled together to celebrate the revolution of 1688, *a band of inflammatory and seditious ruffians* are threatening us with a counter revolution. Yes, a band of seditious and inflammatory ruffians! for what so seditious—what so inflammatory as the papers and paragraphs of those hired assassins—those slander-mongers for ministerial newspapers, who call out for murder and assassination—denounce



their victims by name—fill the country with lying accusations, and dare to say that any person who, even in his professional character, shall venture to plead the cause of those who may be accused and tried, shall be marked as traitors also, and pursued by hatred and punishment? What are these but ruffians? Is not this inflammation and sedition? or something worse? Is it not sedition, also, to attempt to inflame the passions of the populace against their magistrates by calumnious and notorious falsehoods.—Yet what is the conduct of these ministerial scribblers? We all know that a considerable scarcity of the necessaries of life prevails in this country—we all know that the Parliament are going to take this circumstance seriously into consideration—we know from the speech of Mr. Pitt, that the present Lord Mayor has made repeated applications to the Privy Council upon the subject, and displayed the most laudable anxiety to procure redress for the poor. Yet the True Briton has the profligate insolence, in its paragraphs, to charge the Lord Mayor as the cause of the present dearth of these articles: and to invite, in pretty direct terms, the populace of this town to treat him with violence and indignity on the approaching Lord Mayor's day.

What, Citizens, do the writers for ministerial papers call out for tumult? Do they invite violence? Do they preach rebellion? Do they persuade the people to attack the constituted authorities of the country? and are we at a loss to seek for causes for the late unhappy tumult on this side of Temple Bar? Those who find themselves stimulated to violence may but too naturally be inclined to take such advice as a *sort* of absolution for outrages of another kind; and knowing the innocence of the party thus accused, may rashly conclude the fault lays with another equally innocent. The fact is, the profligate and shameless system of war, the devouring corruption, the injustice which results from the common people having no voice in the representation of the country—these are the sources of the distresses they labour under. Yet from the tumult which has taken place in consequence of these distresses, and these inflammatory exhortations of ministerial scribblers, we are threatened that the means shall be worked out of what may properly be called a *counter revolution*. Mark what they have threatened us with? They threaten us in the first place with a bill to prevent all meetings and assemblies of the people for purposes of political discussion—they threaten us also with another suspension of the *Habeas Corpus act*—they threaten

threaten us with another act of parliament to make whatever they shall think fit to call sedition, transportation for 14 years to Botany Bay, on this side the Tweed, as on the other. They threaten us with another act to alter the law of treason, and violate that great palladium of the British constitution, the statute of the 5th of Edward the Third—a statute whose wisdom and efficacy have been recognized reign after reign, and period after period; and every judge, minister, or king, who has attempted to invade it, has been handed down to execration: while many of them have been also handed up to the scaffold!

Though the men who threaten those things call themselves advocates of British liberty, are they the friends of the revolution in 1668? Are they the friends of the British constitution? Why talk to us of revolutions, of changes, of innovations?—I tell you, Britons, if these four acts of parliament pass, a revolution is by them effected: a revolution by which all that we call liberty in this constitution is entirely destroyed; and, with an exception only of the trial by jury, an absolute despotism is established over us—a despotism from which it is in vain to expect peaceable and rational relief: for it is a despotism that at once seals up your mouths, extinguishes your reason, and leaves you no manly, no temperate means of redress.

Citizens, I know not for what purposes these threats have been held out to us. They were perhaps unworthy of notice, since they come only from the lowest hirelings of faction; and I conclude that the legislature of this country cannot possibly have in contemplation any one of these four most infamous and detestable measures. Perhaps they were held out by the hirelings of corruption to feel the pulses of the nation, and know how they would beat with respect to arbitrary usurpation. I will tell you, Citizens very explicitly, how my pulse beats upon the question. If despotism is to be established, it shall not be established over me. If tyranny and ministerial usurpation are to supplant the best provisions of the British constitution, I will not be a Briton, nor wear the badges of slavery and oppression. I will say more—*If the people of this country are so tame, so lost to every sense of justice to themselves and their posterity—so lost to all remembrance of the glorious exertions of their ancestors, as to suffer the Constitution of the country, and all the advantages of the Revolution in 1688 to be overthrown by the hands of ministerial*  
tyranny



tyranny and corruption, they may hug their chains, but I will not. I will do all that man can do, all that the temper, the spirit, and the courage of the times will bear me out in, and if the country has not spirit enough to display a marked and manly opposition to the most direct usurpation over its rights and liberties, much as I have reprobated emigration, I will seek in trans-atlantic regions, a better country, and, under the republican government of *America*, seek for that freedom which will no longer remain in Britain. But I do not believe that the people of this country are tame enough to endure four such acts of parliament\*. I do not believe that the government of this country is bold enough or profligate enough to have in contemplation the passing of four such acts. They cannot but remember the history of past times. They cannot but know, that when men are no longer permitted to use their voices, madness and desperation too frequently succeed; and, their voices being gone, they begin to feel whether they have the use of their hands.

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\* I am happy to find that in this calculation I was not deceived. Two Bills were brought into Parliament, not indeed grasping at all the objects above enumerated, but (in their original form) sufficiently obnoxious to every sentiment of liberty. The people felt and acted as they ought. They were not tumultuous; they were not intemperate; but they were firm and manly; and though their success was not equal to their wishes, their triumph was far from inconsiderable. It was the triumph of *popular reason*, over *ministerial force*; and may tend to shew the *Alarmists on both sides*, that public opinion, when rationally directed, and peaceably concentrated, must be omnipotent. All that is requisite for the remedy of abuses, the resistance of encroachments, and the overthrow of that corruption which exhausts the *cornucopia* of British industry to pamper luxurious usurpation, and glut the dogs of war, is, that we learn to understand our rights, peaceably associate to maintain them, and firmly assert our opinions.

# THE TRIBUNE. N<sup>o</sup>. XLII.

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## ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNFORTUNATE RESTORATION.

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*The first Lecture on the unfortunate Restoration of the  
Tyrannical HOUSE OF STUART. Delivered  
Friday, May 29, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

ONE would imagine that there was something in this subject of a most dangerous and terrible nature indeed. One would suppose, that it must be impossible for any man to open his lips upon such an event, but what every sentence must be fraught with high treason, and every period have a gibbet or halter at the end of it: for out of four news-papers, "The Morning Chronicle," "The Herald," "The Publicans Advertiser," and "The Post," to which I sent my advertisements, only one, that is to say, the *Post*, would venture to insert the terrible libel that proposed an enquiry into the propriety and rationality of those ringings of bells, firings of cannon, and flying standards, with which the 29th of May has generally been celebrated. With that one advertisement, however, it seems that I have been able to draw together a very numerous and respectable audience, and that, inasmuch as the withholding of these advertisements might be meant to prevent attendance, they have completely failed of their effect.

But what is it that can be so shocking and dreadful in this subject? or in the terms of this advertisement? Is it possible that loyalty in this country is sunk to so low an ebb—is it possible that attachment to the house of *Brunswick* is so much out of fashion, that nobody dare to publish one word against the infamous and tyrannical house of *Stuart*, upon the downfall of which, and the overthrow of whose detestable principles, the throne of the *Brunswicks* has been built? It is true, Citizens, that *Charles I.* still stands recorded as a saint



in our Calendar! It is true, also, that something like a saint is made of *Charles II.*: for to make a man a *saint*, or a *god*, after he is dead, it is not at all requisite that there should have been any thing like virtue, humanity, or propriety, in his conduct. Most of the Roman emperors were devils while alive, but were made gods after their death: and I am inclined to think that the generality of those saints, which fill either the Roman or the Protestant Calendars, were not much more estimable. But, whoever may be deities, or whoever may be saints, no man, I conceive, can be loyal to the present constitution, or to the present family, who does not both lament and abhor the tyranny and injustice of the *Stuarts*.—But, Citizens, it is not at all surprising that these inconsistencies and absurdities should still exist among us: for though the Tory faction was apparently overthrown at the *Revolution* in 1688, and though the house of *Stuart* was in the first instance *partially*, and afterwards *totally*, excluded from the throne, yet we must admit that the Revolution itself took place, not so much by the general will of the nation, as by a *coalition of parties*; and that those parties have ever since been sometimes struggling, and sometimes juggling, for the upper hand: sometimes one has been prevalent, and sometimes another. It is not therefore astonishing, that many of the superstitious and foolish bigotries of the house of *Stuart* should still continue sanctified by the stamp of authority; that holidays should be kept at the public offices; that prayers should be offered up, and rejoicings be made, in commemoration of these *Stuarts*—that lamentations should be howled forth over the decapitation of one, and bonfires be made for the restoration of another to the throne, from which a third was obliged to be driven away again.

But let us consider the character of the house of *Stuart* in general; and afterwards consider what was the character of that individual, whose restoration is this day celebrated.

It cannot require much elucidation, nor any great mass of quotations, to put this matter in a clear point of view. It is not necessary to turn over the leaves of those huge folios, called *State Trials*, to demonstrate the infamy of the house of *Stuart*, or to prove that, but for the destruction of that house, nothing like liberty, nothing like public or private virtue, nothing like the peaceful security of our persons, property, or lives, could have remained.

The first of the *Stuarts* that dignified (I was going to say disgraced) the throne of this country, *James* the First, was certainly the best of them. Yet even *James* had little to recommend him but a foolish bigotry, and a superficial talent for learning and literature, which though conspicuous enough in a king, would not have been sufficient to raise a shoe-black from his tripod, or have taken a blacksmith from his anvil. The only reason why we ought have any esteem for him, is that for which he is abused by the generality of historians, namely, that perhaps he was attached to a system of pacification, and did not plunge the country, year after year, into ruinous and destructive wars. The full grown child who succeeded him, *Charles* the First, and whom he was used to describe as *Baby Charles*, was indeed properly so called, for his mind never attained the steady consistency of manhood. The facts of his reign are so well known that it is hardly necessary to advert upon them. However, if we take the most favourable picture of his mind, that which may be drawn from his *Eikon Basilica*, (if indeed it were written by him) which was published for the purpose of restoring his popularity, we shall find only a strange mixture of weak superstition and profligate immorality. Ready to make all promises *in the sight of God*, he broke them in the sight of men as fast as he made them. Never afraid to commit immoral actions, to oppress his subjects, and follow the weak and foolish dictates of vicious ministers and a vicious Queen; he was always trembling in his closet, at bug-bears of his own creation, and *poring out his contrite heart* in the bitterness of repentance: as if prayers and tears could atone for the mischiefs he was always bringing upon an unhappy people, cursed by his tyrannical dominion.

The crimes of this man brought down upon his head the indignation of the people: or rather the indignation of a *faction*, who, though they made more professions of popularity than himself, sometimes shewed themselves not much better in point of principle. Their whole conduct with respect to his trial I can by no means approve; though his fate (if it had been duly and justly administered by the general sense of the nation) I cannot but acknowledge he deserved.

But what was the character of the individual whose restoration is this day celebrated? and what were the circumstances under which he was restored? These are the two great questions



for investigation. If it should be proved that he was amiable, and just, that he was a lover of his people, and a promoter of their happiness, and if it should be found also, that the means by which he was restored were just and honourable, then indeed we ought to exult in his restoration, to talk of its glory and felicity, to ring our bells, display our standards, and fire our cannon. But if, on the contrary, there was every thing profligate in his character, every inclination and attempt to build his own arbitrary authority upon the depression and ruin of the nation—If artifices the most contemptible were made use of to betray the people once more into the fangs of the tyger from which they had escaped, and if both the means of his restoration and its effects were so disgraceful and ruinous to the country as to reduce it to the necessity of appealing to a second revolution, to overthrow the detestable doctrines and practices established by his restoration, then was it an event of great humiliation, and a disgrace to the character of this country, which all who rejoice in it, lend their assistance to increase and to perpetuate.

Citizens, it has been thought a very fair and candid way to judge of the characters of men by the portraits drawn of them by their friends. In this particular it is true, we have better materials to appeal to: we need not trust to any man—we have the facts of history—we have proof upon proof, both of the scandalous manner in which his restoration was managed, and the disgraceful way in which his power was abused to the injury and destruction of this nation. But, Citizens, we mistake ourselves grossly, if we are hurried away with an opinion that these political crimes with which his reign is stained, stopped, as those who wish to prevent enquiry among the people would persuade us, with their external effect upon the government of the country, its reputation abroad, and its apparent stability and grandeur at home.—By the eternal laws of necessity the moral and political existence of every people is so entwined together, that private virtue can only grow up with liberty; and wherever a detestable species of tyranny is supported by blood and dissimulation, there must be an equal depravity of morals.

The character of the vice will, it is true, be affected by the character of the tyranny: but whether the people sink into a gloomy apathy, or are whirled away with that torrent and whirlpool of licentious dissipation which mark the reign I am  
now

now exhibiting for your detestation, government is the great parent of the evil. It is there that the vice begins. If the severe and gloomy fanatics, who disgrace the name of liberty by their bigotry and superstitions, shock the liberal mind, how are the moral feelings wounded by the licentiousness and profligacy restored by *Charles the Second*. Our public theatres, no longer schools of moral instruction, were used as intitements to the stews; the voluptuous passions were rendered sacred by every ornament which wit and genius could give; and vices of every description were held up to the admiration and imitation of the country; so that it is almost astonishing that one wreck of virtue escaped the overwhelming ocean of dissipation in which the people were plunged.

Even Rochester, who was sometimes the friend, and sometimes the satyrist of this monarch—even this man, who certainly had but few of the genuine principles of liberty, and cannot be accused of attachment to the Jacobinical ideas of *equal rights* and *equal laws*; yet could not but be disgusted at the follies, vices, and absurd tyrannies of this reign: even he has, in a very long and spirited satire, expressed his sentiments, sometimes in language which I shall not quote to this audience, relative to this monarch, whose restoration he thus celebrated:—

“ Chaste, pious, prudent, *Charles the second*.

“ The miracle of thy restoration,

“ May like to that of quails be reckoned,

“ Rain’d on the *Israelitish* nation.

“ The wish’d for blessing from heaven sent,

“ Became their curse and punishment.”

He then proceeds to satirize the different vices, follies, and absurdities of this monarch, and concludes with a Philippic, which if it did not come from the pen of a nobleman, I should not dare to quote; and which even as it is, I shall take the liberty of curtailing, lest it should be found high treason in me to repeat what these privileged orders may sometimes think it no treason to write and print.

“ To say such kings, Lord, rule by thee,

“ Were most religious blasphemy.

“ Such know no law but their own lust.

“ Their subjects’ substance and their blood,

“ They count it tribute, due and just,

“ Still spent and spilt for subjects’ good.

“ If



- " If such kings are by God appointed,  
 " The Devil may be the Lord's anointed !  
 " Such kings ! curs'd be the power and name !  
 " Let all the world henceforth abhor 'em——  
 " Monsters, which knaves sacred proclaim,  
 " And then like slaves fall down before 'em."

Nay, Citizens, so strongly was *Rochester* impressed with a detestation of the character of this monarch, that he was even hurried into an indecent satire against the whole sacred race of kings, and dares wickedly and blasphemously to say

- " What can there be in kings divine ?  
 " The most are *wolves, goats, sheep or swine.*"

Such, then, Citizens, was the private character of *Charles the Second, of blessed memory* ! Nay, we need not go to satirics ; we need not even peruse the history of his reign to mark what are the leading traits of this character. Even before his restoration this character had been rendered conspicuous by such indubitable traits, that we cannot but wonder at the stupidity of a nation which could suffer such a man to reign over them ; much less restore him without any bond or limits whatever to the power and authority he was to exercise.

You will remember, Citizens, that very shortly after the execution of that *holy martyr* his father, the Scotch nation (who though desirous of restraining the royal power, were not willing to overthrow it entirely, and still less to submit to the usurpations of *Cromwell*) sent ambassadors to *Charles* while he was at *Paris*, to persuade him to return, and take upon himself the sovereignty of Scotland. What was the first question put to them by the grave lord chancellor *HYDE*, the sacred depository of the king's confidence, and, according to the constitutional wisdom of this country, the guardian of his conscience ? Why this confidential character, in the presence of *Charles*, enquires " what kind of accommodations they could " make for his royal person ? " What luxuries they could provide for his table ? what splendid palaces they could lodge him in ? and how well they could support him in that expensive, easy and luxurious way he was attached to ? so that it might be unnecessary to bring any bills into parliament, for the discharge of his debts at any future time.

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The Scotch commissioners, as well might be the case, were not a little disgusted by the question. They thought it somewhat strange, while they were ready to stake their fortunes and their lives for his restoration, that he was thinking only of the incense and sacrifices to be made to him, and not of the means by which he should repay them for their worship, by protecting them, and hazarding, in his turn, that sacred person for which they expressed so great a veneration.

But luxury and profligacy were so far from being the most distinguished vices of *Charles*, that when you consider the other parts of his character, you will almost be induced to regard them as his virtues: hypocrisy—deep dissimulation—a cruel and revengeful spirit—these were the vices that deformed his heart, and which, even in solitude and banishment actuated his mind, and governed his counsels.

The same Scotch nation sent, at another period, also, one *Drummond*, and other commissioners over to him, to treat again about his restoration to the Scotch throne. They insisted, it is true, or rather they hinted that it would be expected, that some terms should be made, some restrictions agreed to; and that he should take the throne, not as a despot, but as a limited sovereign. And what was the conduct of *Charles*? Did he show a disposition to enter fairly into the merits of these restrictions? No, he shrunk from the very idea of having any shackles put upon his authority: and though he dismissed the commissioners with fair words and promises of friendship, his mind, instead of feeling an impression of attachment, was brooding over the gloomy passions of revenge: and he ordered *Montrose* to make a descent upon the coast of *Scotland*, to punish the audacious traitors, who while they wished to restore him, dared to wish some little security for the liberties of themselves and of their consciences. His affairs however soon began to assume a more gloomy appearance; and he found that it was necessary to enter into some sort of negotiation with the *Scotch*. *Holland* was accordingly appointed, as the scene of their negotiations. He pretended to deliberate with them, and pretended to be desirous of meeting them on fair terms. But, at the very moment, such was royal faith, in the time of the *Stuarts*!—at the very moment that he met, with hypocritical countenance, these commissioners, to discuss the treaty upon which he was to be restored, he sent pressing orders



ders to *Montrose* to be more speedy in the execution of his projected invasion: "hoping that it might please *God*" such was his language! "to give success to his arms," that is, to enable him to cut the throats of those who were willing to restore him to the throne with restrictions, which he hoped to ascend again as an arbitrary monarch.

Such, Citizens, were the traits of character which, even in misfortune, distinguished *Charles* the Second. I have said before that I will not dwell particularly upon his profligacies, because those, though sufficient to have marked a common man with infamy, may pass for virtues in one who had so many vices of a deeper dye.

Yet, notwithstanding all this experience of his baseness—  
notwithstanding all the fatal consequences that had been brought upon the country by the tyranny of his father, the people were graciously inclined to pardon all his errors, and he was suffered once more to take the throne of his ancestors, as it is called. I shall call it the throne of the people: and I believe it would be happier for kings if they themselves were to feel that the throne is the property of the people, and not of a particular individual: because if they did so feel, they would be induced to reign and govern with such principles of benevolence as would diffuse a general happiness around them, and thereby secure to themselves a greater felicity than the sordid usurpation of power, or the monopoly of sensual gratifications ever could render to any individual whatever.

But, Citizens, he was not only restored to the throne; he was restored without restriction; without terms or conditions. The artifices of *Hyde*, earl of *Clarendon*, and *Monk*, earl of *Albemarle*, whom truth and the love of liberty will ever hand down from generation to generation with infamy:—the arts, cabals, and intrigues of these men, disappointed those good and real patriots who would have restrained his prerogative within due limits, and have taken care, when they put a sceptre in his hand, to have prevented him from converting it into a rod of iron, to bruise and crush the people over whom he was to reign; and who were to pay so largely for the maintenance of his grandeur.

I know, Citizens, that there are many who are not disposed to treat either *Monk* or *Clarendon* so harshly. Let us appeal to facts. Let us turn, if you will, to the pages of *Burnet*—let us turn to the faithful volumes of *Rapin*, and see

will see there what were the merits of those men; what were the characters with which they ought to be handed down to posterity. You will find that *Monk*, instead of being a man determined to risk and sacrifice every thing for the sake of those principles to which he was attached, was a man without any principle at all.

I can applaud, I can venerate the man of principle, however different these principles may be from my own. The particular circumstances under which individuals have been placed, act like an imperious necessity upon them. Man must not only be born with eyes, he must be brought into the light before he can see. Man also must have opportunities as well as faculties before he can be possessed of knowledge. A particular chain of occurrences, inducing a particular chain of enquiry, may lead to particular conclusions, and judging upon such materials as we have, we may entertain a firm conviction of their truth. Another man may never have an opportunity of examining those truths we have examined, and may therefore maintain, with equal honesty, different opinions from ourselves. These men are to be equally respected. If they act according to their principles—that is to say, according to their knowledge, they are to be loved and revered.

But let us never decorate with epithets of applause and admiration the wretch whose conduct shews him to be destitute of all principle, watching only for the opportunity most to his own advantage, and sacrificing nations that he may gratify his personal ambition. Yet such was the character of *Monk*, the restorer of the House of *Stuart*. Such also to a considerable degree, was the character of *Hyde*, earl of *Clarendon*, though certainly not so strongly marked as that of the General. *Monk* had been a zealous supporter of republicanism: he had been the tool of *Cromwell*: he had subdued *Scotland*, and driven the royalists from the coasts of that country. *Monk*, after the decease of *Cromwell*, wished to be a *Cromwell* himself; to grasp the power which *Richard Cromwell* had lost, and to make himself sovereign over the nation; though, perhaps, without the title of sovereignty.—But when *Monk* found it impossible, maugre all his hypocrisy and duplicity (and no man ever had more) to worm himself into power, and that he had not the popularity to seize it by open exertion, then he thought it time to make his peace with the royal party; to be the *Dumourier* of *Eng-*



*land*; and he took care, as the only means that he had to recommend himself to the royal party, which he saw must be restored, to sacrifice the liberties of the country entirely, by frustrating every attempt for putting restrictions upon the king, and making terms with him before he was restored. It was he who, when lord *Hale* moved that negotiations should be opened with the king, under pretence that he could not answer for the peace of the country in case of any delay, and that he was in possession of important information which it was not at that time prudent to submit to the discussion of the House—it was he, who standing forward the great prototype of our present *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, and demanding *confidence without virtue, and trust without sincerity*, occasioned a tumultuous vote to be passed, that the king should first be restored to all his power, prerogatives and authority, and that then they might negotiate with him for such portions as he was inclined to surrender back again.

I will not trouble you with the words of particular authors. You will find, however, in the second volume of *Rapin*, and and in *Burnet's Summary of Transactions*, previous to the restoration, sufficient documents to support the opinion I have advanced.

But, Citizens, what were the consequences of this restoration? the men who had been made the dupes of this *Monk*, and of this *Clarendon*, very soon found reason to lament their unfortunate credulity—and *Southampton*, who has been dignified by writers of a particular class, with the epithet of the *virtuous Southampton*, very soon found reason to reproach *Hyde* with the deception he had put upon the people, and with having prevented them by his professions and misrepresentations, from putting restrictions upon him, which would have prevented him from doing himself and the nation that mischief which he was plunging into at such a headlong rate.

But suppose we dwell a little particularly upon the nature of the *grievances* (the  *blessings*, one would suppose, by the rejoicings of this day!) entailed upon the nation by this unqualified restoration. The first fruit was the adoption and confirmation of the system of *excise*. There are, I dare say, many persons present who have reason to know what an excellent, what a wise, what a virtuous, what a humane and benevolent system of taxation, these excise laws are. And I dare say they will divide, in just proportions, their admiration  
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of those laws, between the authors of the restoration of *Charles the Second*, by which the foundation was laid, and the *present immaculate minister*, by whom so many additions have been made.

Another of the steps that was immediately taken by this restored hero of the House of *Stuart* was, the adoption of a *standing army*: another of those advantages for which we shall not be able to confine our gratitude exclusively to the ministers of the House of *Stuart*.

But the nature of the power is of less consequence than the way in which it was used. Let us see then what were the virtues and good qualities of *Charles the Second*, which he displayed after he was restored to the throne. Had adversity taught him justice and moderation?—had adversity induced reflection?—had he learned to venerate his *word*?—a virtue it should seem, the necessary attribute of all regular governments!

What were his promises before he was restored? Universal indemnity to all persons, except the immediate judges of his father: and even those were not entirely excluded from hope, upon condition that they submitted within the limited time to his mercy. But did he fulfil either this or the other part of his promise, by which the universal liberty of conscience was to have been extended, and all ranks and denominations of men were to be permitted to worship God according to the dictates of their own hearts, without unjust distinctions, intolerance or persecution? Mark the reverse.—He was no sooner seated on the throne than he took advantage of a little dirty evasive pretence that *Scotland* was not included in his promise; that he only promised forbearance to his *English* subjects. Accordingly persecution in *Scotland* raged with all its fury: the virtuous *Argyle* fell a victim to his rancorous revenge; and tyranny again domineered over the consciences of those without whose assistance he never could have had the power to tyrannize at all.

Think also of the disgraceful execution of Sir *Harry Vane*, who was by no means included in the list excepted from the promised indemnity. The two houses of parliament joined together in a recommendation to the king, to spare him; and the king repeated his promise: but *royal* promises, you know the proverb, like pye crust are made to be broken. Sir *Harry Vane* alledged to no purpose the promise at *Breda*; the recommendation of the two houses of



parliament, and the repeated promise of the king. He was given to understand that mean concessions and cringing supplications were expected; but the upright spirit of that republican disdained such meanness.

Sir *Harry Vane* was arraigned as a traitor, and it was in vain that he adduced incontrovertible arguments to prove that the charge brought against him could be no treason, and that therefore his arraignment was unjust: it was in vain that he proved from the letter and spirit of the various acts of parliament, upon which and which alone the crime of high treason rested, that *Charles* the Second being no king, *de facto*, at the time of the alledged treason—that the sovereign power and authority being vested in other hands, treason could not be committed against him. His arguments were of no avail; for the courts of justice were contaminated by corruption, and a venal and servile spirit, too frequently conspicuous upon the bench, made it impossible for any man obnoxious to the court, to hope for justice. This violation of his engagements was followed by repeated attacks upon every species of dissenters; and though it is well known, that the presbyterians in particular were great promoters of the restoration, yet every dirty pretence, every dishonourable invention was appealed to, in order to find excuses for their persecution; while the high-church tories, a sort of half-way beings, between Protestant and Roman Catholic, were made the willing tools of the ambition and usurpation of the court.

But, Citizens, pretences for this persecution were necessary: for even those who are possessed of the most uncontrouled authority, generally choose to have a pretence for what they do. Pretences accordingly were easily found—plots and conspiracies were fabricated again and again; and, in five or six years, *Rapin* gives you a list of six or seven different conspiracies, which never had any existence but in the imaginations of the ministers who created them, to excite alarms, and direct the fears and irritated passions of the people to those views and objects upon which they had fixed their particular attention.

You will find, I say, if you appeal to *Rapin*, that the first five or six years of the reign of *Charles* the Second, were agitated by incessant reports of plots and conspiracies—that the changes upon republicans and levellers, were incessantly rung in the ears of the nation—so that five or six people could not meet together but there was a plot and conspiracy. Indeed

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in this respect this part of the reign of *Charles the Second* might properly enough be compared with, the *reign*, I was going to say, but I mean the *administration*, of *William Pitt*: except this, that I do not find that *Charles* had so infamous a train of spies and informers as the more refined policy of the present day has produced.

With these false plots and conspiracies the ministers contrived to irritate the feelings of the people, and to create pretences for increasing the power and prerogative of the crown. Real conspiracies, however, there were—for whenever there is a pretence of conspiracies in one place, you may be sure there are real conspiracies in another. Nor can we be ignorant that the absolute conspiracies formed by the *Cabal* administration of *Charles the Second*, to annihilate the liberties of the country, and establish a perfect despotism, or in the language of the conspirators, to make the king a great prince, were the real causes why so many false plots and conspiracies were fabricated in those days.

One of the engines made use of for the accomplishment of this grand ministerial conspiracy was the corruption of parliament—the buying up of the votes of certain members, and influencing them by places and pensions to fall in with the views of the court. They had not then, however, learned the art completely—they did not quite know what the price of the House of Commons was. It was a little before the time of *Sir Robert Walpole*. But though they had not so learned the price of every man, that they could make sure of his vote, they had carried it so far that *Rochester* has thought fit to characterize the Parliament at that time in the following stanzas,

- " A Parliament of knaves and fots,
- " (Members by name you must not mention)
- " He keeps in pay, and buys their votes ;
- " Here with a place there with a pension.
- " When to give money he can't colloque 'em,
- " He does with scorn prorogue, prorogue 'em.
  
- " But they long since by too much giving,
- " Undid, betray'd and sold the nation,
- " Making their memberships a living,
- " Better than ever was sequestration.
- " God give thee, *Charles*, a resolution
- " To damn the knaves by dissolution."

Citizens,



Citizens, Charles took his monitory poet at his word; for finding that, though he could keep them in order for a little time, yet he had not learned the complete art of managing the Commons; his next attempt was to do without them—he therefore, at the latter end of his reign, resolved that he would call no Parliament at all. Perhaps, indeed, he might do it from a benevolent attachment to the interests of the people, whom he thought it superfluous to tax to such a degree for the purpose of buying up the House of Commons, when he could rule quite as well and more frugally without them. And he knew it was just the same thing to the people, whether they had a parliament dependent upon the nod and will of the cabinet, or whether they had no parliament at all.

Thus, Citizens, he got rid of his Parliaments. But you will take it for granted that there was yet one bar to his ambition: namely, the courts of justice. I dare say there are some persons here who are students of the law, and who have read Mr. Justice *Blackstone*, and a great many of those learned, illustrious, and upright Judges who have written panegyrics upon the purity of the English bench. But whatever may be the case in present times, when judges scorn the idea of pensions and favours from the crown—establishments for their families, or sinecure places for their little children in arms—whatever, I say, may be the case now the judges are so independent, we shall find that the bench was not always quite so pure. Even at the very outset of the reign of *Charles the Second*, we find the bench propagating doctrines so diabolical, and countenancing practices so revolting to every principle of justice, liberty, and humanity, that one has hardly patience to turn over the two monstrous volumes of state prosecutions collected from his reign without feeling extreme indignation.

Mark the doctrines with which the judges set out at the beginning. They tell you—but that you have been told very often—that “The king can do no wrong:” and however strange it may appear, I uphold the doctrine: for I say that *when a king does wrong he ceases to be king*. This I say is the meaning of the maxim—and I can prove it by acts of parliament. I can prove it by precedents. I can prove it (and I mean to prove it in this place, when I come to lecture upon that subject) from the most constitutional documents, that the meaning of the maxim is this—That *the King's power is*  
*given*

given to him for the benefit and advantage of the people, and not for the arbitrary pleasure of the individual, and that therefore he has no power to do as king, that which is inconsistent with the purpose for which his power was given: the difference between KING and TYRANT consisting in this, that the FORMER is a MAGISTRATE created by law, and the LATTER an USURPER who sets himself up above the law: ergo—the man who being made king by the law, for the benefit of the people, governs in an arbitrary way, in opposition to the law by which he was so made, does that which, as king, he cannot do; in other words, ceases to be KING, and becomes a TYRANT whom the people are neither bound to obey, nor, constitutionally, can obey—for he has abandoned his constitutional existence, and ceased to be one of the constituted authorities. The word *can*, in its legal acceptation always means, not *physical* but *legal* power: and when it is said you cannot do so and so, it means *you have no legal power so to do*. Thus you cannot break down your neighbour's fence, you cannot commit such and such a trespass, you cannot wall up your neighbour's window without his consent: so that *the king can do no wrong*, means that *he has no authority vested in him, by right of his kingly office, to injure his subjects*; that *whatever wrong he does is not the act of a king but the act of an usurper*; and as you are called upon to obey him when he does right, you are also called upon to resist him when he does wrong—with this provision, however, which is necessary for the peace and existence of society—that the wrong is to be judged not by the caprice of the individual, but by the maxims and spirit of the constitution, and the general decision of the nation.

The judges however, in the times of *Charles the Second*, made use of the maxim in a very different sense: for it was the business of the judges in those times, as under all vicious administrations, not to *explain*, but to *pervert* the law. They therefore tell you that, in every sense, the person who has once been king, or who has a title to be king, *can do no wrong*. That he is subject to no restraint, and liable to no opposition. And they tell you, in express language, that “no authority, no single person, nor no community of persons, not the people either collectively, or representatively, have any coercive power over a king of *England*.” [St. Tr. vol. p. ] They tell you also that “the crown of England  
“ is



"is an imperial crown," telling you afterwards, that "by imperial crown they mean an absolute crown," and that "the monarchy of England is an absolute monarchy."

Now let us observe what is the language of our constitutional authorities. Do they they talk of "the empire of England?" Do they talk of "the monarchy of England?" Do they talk of "the kingdom of England?" I say no; they talk of "the *Commonwealth* of England," and of the *king* as "the first magistrate of that commonwealth." I refer you to all our old constitutional writers—I refer you to Lord *Coke* himself; and see if he does not treat of the government of this country as a commonwealth; and whether he does not treat of the royal authority of this country, as of the authority of the chief magistrate of a commonwealth.

This being the case, mark what you got by your *Glorious Restoration*—mark what were the first fruits you reaped when having so many years endured a scene of tumult in order to get rid of tyranny, you restored, without terms, the germ of that tyranny which you had once exterminated.

The Chief Baron of the Exchequer, who was at the head of the commission upon the trials of the regicides, tells you, that "the king of *Poland*, indeed, has a crown: "but what is it? At his coronation it is conditioned by "the people that, if he should not govern them by such "rules, they shall be freed from their homage and allegiance; but the crown of England is and always was "an imperial crown." And he tells you, that the meaning of those words, imperial crown, is, that the crown of England is absolutely free from all controul or coercion of the people. But he adds—for few men have the audacity to propagate falsehood, without afterwards, by some sophistry or other, endeavouring to explain it away; that is to say, in reality, contradicting themselves: it is one of the external marks of false and tyrannical systems, that they are full of incongruities and contradictions. The doctrines of virtue are plain, strait forward and consistent. The doctrines of falsehood and tyranny are full of obscurities, inconsistencies, absurdities, and sophisms—"God forbid," says he, "that I should intend an absolute government by this. It is one thing to have an  
" abso-

“absolute monarchy, another thing to have that government absolutely without laws.”

Now, Citizens, I should like to know if, as he says in another place, “the king has the infirmities and weakness of a man, but he cannot do any injury,” if, as he says in another place, that “the king is to govern according to the laws, but, at the same time, there is no law to restrain him whatever he chooses to do”—I should like to be told, What is the difference between an absolute monarch, and a monarch absolutely without laws? For if there are laws, and it is the duty of the king in conscience to abide by those laws, and yet there is neither tribunal nor censorship to judge of that conscience, however it may chance to be seared “as with a red hot iron,” as was the case with *Charles*, what are laws in this respect but *chains of cobweb* on the limbs of a giant. He is to be bound you say, but nobody is to fix the bonds but himself; they are to be put on at his own pleasure, and when he chooses to break them nobody is to fix them again. He is to do that which is reasonable and just, but if he chooses “to run a muck at every one he meets,” it is treason to endeavour to chain the madman. This judicial logician, says also, (for he found it necessary to talk about liberties) “it is not the sharing the government that is for the benefit of the people; they are to have no share of the government that is not for their advantage, but that which is for the benefit of the subject is how they may have their lives, liberties, and properties secured under governments.”

Now I agree that *that which is for the benefit of the subject is how they may have their lives, liberties, and properties secured under government.*

But if the king and his ministers are to be at liberty to do what they please, and the people have no right, no power to restrain or coerce them, I should like to know how these lives, liberties, and properties are to be protected. It is a very fine thing to say, “Here you are. I have no right indeed to strangle you immediately; but if by my Janissaries I should attempt to strangle you all, you have no right to resist or or coerce me, for I can do no wrong; but at the same time I am so to strangle you as will be left for the protection of your lives, liberty and property: I am to exercise my power only for your benefit



nefit and advantage, but I am sole judge, and if I take it in my head that it is the best thing for your benefit and advantage to trample you in the dust, you must not coerce me; no, that is a violation of your constitution, and an offence against my imperial crown."

But these judges did not stop here, they even refused the persons tried for their lives the liberty of making a defence: they not only forbad them counsel, not only forbad them legal advice, but when the men (feeling an honest and firm conviction, that what they had done, was done from the pure dictates of truth and conscience, that labouring for the benefit of the people, they had acted according to their own judgment) attempted to vindicate their conduct, they put them to silence, and condemned them unheard.

And yet what else can man act from but the dictates of his own judgment! If his judgment dictates wrong, let the laws of his country and the opinions of his fellow-citizens judge him for that error, but let him state fully the reasonings upon which his convictions are built, that they may be judged fairly: let him not be destroyed by *ex parte* reasoning as those men of honest and upright consciences were: and honest and upright I must conclude them.—Whether their judgments were correct or no, is another thing. Condemning them unheard is, however, but an indifferent argument that their judges themselves were convinced that they were wrong.

But at any rate, where is the justice if judges shall have the audacity from the bench to say, "Sir, you shall not make your defence in that way—Sir you have no right to make use of arguments of that kind—Sir you must hold your tongue, or we will send you to *Bedlam* to be confined till the executioner is ready to do his office at *Tyburn*." Yet such were the very words with which the mouth of the brave *Harrison* was stopped. Is this justice? or is it tyranny? Is it a thing to be gloried in, or a thing to be blamed? Surely in all trials two things are to be judged, first, whether the facts alledged are true; secondly, if true, whether they are criminal.

But trial is absurd, if the accused are not at liberty to bring arguments in their vindication. In this reign then state offenders, and the regicides in particular, were condemned, it is true—and executed, but they were not tried,

tried, and the judges, the juries, and the executors, are all alike to be reckoned as murderers.

Such, then, Citizens, were part of the effects of the restoration of *Charles*. It is impossible for me at this late hour, to go more at large into the subject; or to handle, at this time, that important part of the enquiry, namely, the causes which conduced to this scandalous restoration. These I must defer to the next Lecture; in which I shall pursue this enquiry; and endeavour, by tracing the circumstances of the revolution in 1649, and comparing them with the revolution that has since taken place in France, to shew you that no argument in favour of the restoration of royalty in the latter, can be drawn from the circumstance of the restoration in the former. I will endeavour to detect this sophism by shewing, that the causes are materially different; and that consequently the effects cannot be the same. Let it be remembered, however, that I am prosecuting this merely as an historical and philosophical enquiry; and who shall deny to Britons the right of enquiring into the causes and consequences of the events of former periods—of comparing the former with the present; and thence pointing out the grounds and expectations of success relative to the ridiculous or wise projects into which our ministers may plunge us.

The object of my enquiry then is to shew you in the first place, that you ought not to exult in the unconditional restoration of the House of *Stuart*; and that if you do, you are enemies to that revolution in 1688, by which another system of principles was established: and to shew you in the next place, that you are not to conclude that because the son of *Charles* the First was restored in *England*, that the son of *Louis* the Sixteenth will be restored in *France*.

In the investigation of this second branch, I shall endeavour to point out the different circumstances of the two countries. I shall also endeavour to shew you, notwithstanding all the disturbances, factions, and tumults which have taken place in *France*, that the human race cannot fail of being benefited by the establishment of a new species of government, from which greater happiness must inevitably be extended to *France* than it enjoyed under the former tyranny: and I shall endeavour to prove, that one of the reasons why royalty will not, and ought not



not to be restored in *France*, is that very reason which has frequently been urged why it must be and ought to be restored—namely, the extent of the country. For so far from agreeing with that venerable old prejudice, that none but small countries can be republics, I shall endeavour to convince you, that *the larger the country the greater the necessity for a republican government*: because it is that government, and that alone which can have energy enough to pervade so immense a mass, and diffuse at once equal and general liberty and happiness to every part of the country.

*Lectures on the Revolutions of Rome every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, during Lent. Admittance 1s.*

The following subjects have been already treated in this  
COURSE.

1. The advantages of the study of history.
2. A brief Review of the rise, progress, and decline of Roman grandeur.
3. The mixed government, or limited monarchy of ancient Rome; with strictures on elective and hereditary royalty, and a Digression on the constitution and fate of Poland.
4. Further animadversions on the regal government; the subserviency of priestcraft to royal usurpation; with a digression on the republican governments of America and France.
5. The abuses of kingly power which led to the extermination of royalty; including the invasion of the right of universal suffrage.

*The following, among other subjects, will be successively treated in the remaining part of the Course.*

1. A refutation of the pretences for depriving the Roman people of their constitutional right of EQUAL SUFFRAGE, and further animadversions on the arbitrary usurpations that occasioned the abolition of royalty; with parallels between that event and the revolutions in France and Holland.
2. The absurdity and wickedness of the confederacy of kings for the destruction of the Roman Republic, and the restoration of the tyranny of the Tarquins.
3. The arrogance, rapacity, and usurpations of the Roman Aristocracy, and consequent depression and misery of the people.
4. The sedition of the sacred Mount, and the appointment of the tribunes of the people—or introduction of popular representation into the Roman Government.
5. The defects of the Tribunitian institution, or popular representation in Rome; its abuses, corruptions, and decline; with strictures on the distinctions between the Democracies of the ancient and modern world—illustrated by the examples of Athens and Sparta—of Rome—of America and France.

N. B. As the Convention Act relates only to Lectures on the Laws, Constitution, &c. of these realms, and as no allusions will be made to these Realms, this Course is subject to neither Penalties nor legal Interruptions.—See a PROSPECTUS, Price 6d. Sold at the LECTURE ROOM, BEAUFORT-BUILDINGS; and by Eaton, Smith, &c.

SATURDAY, Feb. 20, 1796.

## THE TRIBUNE No. XLIII.

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*The Second Lecture on the UNFORTUNATE RESTORATION of the HOUSE OF STUART, with Strictures on the Differences between the ENGLISH REVOLUTION 1649, and that of FRANCE, in 1792, and the Impossibility of restoring Royalty in the latter Country: including a Delineation of the CHARACTER OF CROMWELL. Delivered Wednesday June 3, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

THE subject upon the investigation which I enter for the second time this evening undoubtedly demands a very considerable degree attention, and requires that the man who attempts to investigate it with that freedom and boldness without which no advantage can arise from investigation, should have all his watchful faculties about him, that he may avoid unguarded and rash expressions, with which people of warm imaginations sometime outstep their better judgments. The person indeed who stands periodically in a situation like this, ought to have a patent of infallibility to preserve him from those accidents to which the persons and tempers of mankind are liable. For an audience is seldom disposed to make much allowance for the accidents with which a man may be visited. They judge his oration or his book according to the execution, and never enquire into the particular embarrassments under which he laboured at the time of the production. It is my misfortune, however, not to be sufficiently acquainted with his Holiness the Pope, to attain this patent of infallibility; and therefore I have been frequently obliged to come before you under circumstances of considerable embarrassment.

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ment. At this very time you may perhaps perceive, that I labour under an inconvenience of health, peculiarly unfavourable to the exertions of oratory: and though it is long since I was in the habit of being frightened at my own shadow, it may happen in the course of this Lecture that I may be so much frightened at the sound of my own voice, that it may embarrass me very much.

Those who attended on the former evening will remember I entered as largely as time would permit into a consideration of the mischiefs brought upon us by the unfortunate restoration of the House of *Stuart*; and particularly from the very disgraceful manner in which that restoration was effected, by the intrigues of *Clarendon* and *Monk*, by which the better part of the nation were prevented from laying *Charles* under those restrictions which otherwise perhaps would have saved this country from a considerable part of the calamities brought upon it. I ventured, however, to consider the very circumstance of restoring a family so disgraced by every tyranny and usurpation as a national calamity.

Whether any persons differ from me in this respect or not, at any rate, when we consider the mischiefs resulting from the unqualified restoration, there is no dread of being convicted of high treason for saying, that this event, so frequently celebrated, by the preaching of sermons, the ringing of bells, the firing of guns, and the mounting of standards, is in reality one of those disgraceful events which stigmatize the wisdom of this nation.

Citizens, I took a considerable survey of the tyranny, the injustice, the artful falsehoods of that reign, together with the plots and conspiracies of *Charles* and his courtiers (*for kings and courtiers can be conspirators!*—and indeed it is generally within the verge of courts that real conspiracies originate!) The innumerable calamities that were brought upon the country, the profligate expenditure of public money, the corruption introduced into every branch of the government, and all the mischiefs of this reign, it is not necessary for me now particularly to dwell upon. Suffice it to say, they were such as to compel the country in a few years after this restoration, to appeal to another revolution; to drive the brother of *Charles* the Second from the throne; to bastardize his son by a ridiculous act of parliament, and afterwards to cut off the entail, and introduce another family to the throne.

Now, if we admit that revolutions are calamities, we must  
lament,

lament, also, those still greater and heavier calamities which necessitate a country to appeal to revolutions: and if we mean to say that the revolution in 1688, was justifiable, proper and necessary, we pronounce the *restoration of the House of Stuart* a calamity: for whatever advantages resulted from the *Revolution in 1688*, (though whig historians boast that it cost no blood) it has deluged not only great portions of the British empire, but the whole of Europe with blood for near a century. To this circumstance we are to attribute a great part of the wars in which *Britain* since that period has been engaged, since the pretensions of French despotism (now so fortunately and happily overthrown) for interfering with this country to restore the House of *Stuart*, are certainly to be considered among the causes of those wars, which have produced so considerable a depopulation and so enormous a debt.

We are to consider, also, that though in *England* no bloody battles were fought for the maintenance of that revolution, yet that in *Ireland* there was a long train of battles, cruelties and horrors which imagination sickens to contemplate, and that *Scotland* was disgraced by the massacre of *Glencoe*—a massacre which, in my opinion, fixes an indelible stain upon the memory of *William*, and is a dreadful drawback from that general applause so frequently poured upon him.

But, Citizens, this is not all. The *Revolution in 1688*, (glorious and happy as it was) did not entirely remove the calamities and mischiefs brought into this country by the restoration of the *Stuarts*. I shall take no notice now of the pretences made use of for perpetuating the innovation of a standing army. I shall take no notice of the perpetuation, and continual growth of that monstrous system of taxation called excise. Independent of these circumstances, the calamities produced by the profligate expenditure of public money by *Charles the Second*, did not die with him, with the debts that he contracted, or with the immediate mischiefs produced by his own personal extravagance.

At this time we continue to pay heavy and grievous taxes, in consequence of his licentious pleasures: among the vices of *Charles the Second*, good care is taken that we shall not forget his attachment to the Turkish fashion of keeping a grand seraglio.

Citizens, some Christian princes are Turks, some are Heathens, and some are Centaurs. Some Christian princes



choose to keep grand seraglios, and some Christian princes choose to keep great studs, and heigho for Newmarket! and 300l. a day more than their revenue is expended; and some Christian princes choose to lock up million after million in their strong chest, to show their devotion to the god Plutus. I shall, however, take the liberty of observing that neither grand seraglios, nor gambling at Newmarket, nor strong boxes are of any benefit to the people of this country; and that princes are then valuable and then only, when blending benevolence and liberality, and making prudence keep pace with generosity, that the nation may not be burdened with unnecessary taxes, they extend that revenue which is liberally granted them by the people, in rewarding independence, virtue and ingenuity; and, in short, to sum up all perfection in one short sentence, princes are only valuable when, like the present sovereign upon the throne, they dispense universal peace, happiness, and felicity through the country over which they reign.

To return from this digression—having considered the calamities which resulted from the unfortunate restoration of the house of *Stuart*, let us now proceed to investigate the causes of that restoration.

Persons who have read in a superficial way—and sometimes even great ministers are very superficial fellows!—Persons who have read history superficially, observing the catastrophe of the *English Revolution* in 1649, are inclined to suppose that a similar catastrophe will take place in *France*; and that either the present Dauphin will be restored to the throne, like the son of *Charles* the first; or else that some other *dynasty* will be set up by the great men of that country, and royalty be again triumphant in that nation. But Citizens before we jump into conclusions, let us look at our premises; let us see that there is no ditch on the other side into which we may be in danger of falling, and breaking the neck of our logical reputation. Were the revolution of 1649 in *England* and of 1789 in *France* produced by similar causes? Are the circumstances of society in *France* now such as the circumstances of society in *England* were at that time? and have the same steps been taken or the same phenomena appeared in *France* during the present struggle as appeared in *England* during the struggle to which I am appealing? If we can answer these three questions in the affirmative, there is a strong presumption (be it remembered however it is nothing but a presumption) that a similar catastrophe will take place in *France*.

Let

Let us compare then the genius of the two revolutions.— The English revolution in 1649 was produced not so much by the luxury, the extravagance, and the profligacy of the court, together with a state of bankruptcy in the nation, as it was by certain causes, powerful indeed in their operation, but confined in their immediate action to a narrower sphere. The plain and simple truth is, that since the overthrow of our Saxon institutions, the sun of Liberty had never shone, with unclouded beams, upon this unhappy country. A band of *Norman robbers* had laid prostrate at their feet every thing that looked like law and justice. They had trampled down both liberty and property, and seizing every thing into their own arbitrary hands, had dispensed again to the original proprietors part of those lands, tenements and effects, in vassalage; and thereby held the country in progressive links of slavery, from the greatest baron to the poorest peasant who was sold, like the cattle, with the estate upon which he laboured, and treated with more indignity than the very tools he worked with. In process of time, the rising spirit, first of the nobility, afterwards of the country gentlemen, and after that of the trading interest of the country, made considerable encroachments upon the tyranny which the Normans had established. It was fortunate, also, for the country, that some of the memorials of ancient liberty were still in existence: some of the maxims of common law (which certainly afford the only foundation there is for boasting of the particular excellency of our system of jurisprudence) still survived the general wreck; and from these fragments men began to comprehend what the structure was when entire, and were eager to build again that Gothic shrine of Liberty, beneath which their ancestors had once lived in happiness and security. Time after time, the contentions between the kings and the great barons gave the people opportunities of recovering part of their rights. It happened, however, that the progress of information was more rapid than the progress of political improvement.

When literature began to dawn over the western hemisphere, knowledge (though we were rather late in hailing the sacred beam) was not entirely neglected in England. In the reign of Elizabeth, who certainly was not less tyrannical than most of her predecessors, yet, as letters became considerably cultivated among particular classes of society, mankind began to awake from their lethargy; and though, under her vigorous



rous administration, they were not strong enough boldly to demand their rights, yet the growth and progress of literature enabled them, under the succeeding reigns, to claim, with a firmer tone, a restoration of the ancient rights of *Englishmen*. They succeeded in a considerable degree, time after time, in the work of political amelioration. Unfortunately at that time, however, the light of science was diffused only through a narrow circle: it had broken down, indeed, the walls of cloisters and monasteries: it had travelled beyond the studies of bishops and great peers; and the gentry of the country began to think that it was no disgrace to be able to read and write. But unfortunately the great mass of the people were not enlightened; and therefore we find that, in the reign of *Charles the First*, the people were only led forward by a few intelligent minds—men of great capacity and great personal courage, who led on the people, not so much by disseminating information, as by that dependance in which, on account of their large property, they continued to hold so large a portion of the country.

There was, however, a very *active spirit* of another kind among the people. They had light indeed (inward light) which, though it came not through the optics of reason, produced a considerable ferment in their blood, and made them cry out for that liberty, the very meaning of which they did not comprehend. In fact, the mass of the people were quickened, not by the generous spirit of liberty, but by the active spirit of fanaticism. Such, then, was the state of society at the time of the Revolution, that terminated in the first stage in 1649, and in the second stage with the restoration of *Charles the Second*. Among the leaders who stood forward, and signalized themselves in that cause, there were certainly men whose virtues, courage, and transcendent talents, will demand admiration, so long as the *English* language shall exist. It is to be lamented, however, that all the characters in that revolution were not men of equal virtue. I need only name *Oliver Cromwell*; who, though he set out perhaps, with as large a portion of the love of liberty as was possible for a hypocritical fanatic, yet undoubtedly in the end proved himself to be, not a reforming patriot, but an ambitious usurper. Unfortunately, however, the state of the public mind was such, that the hypocritical pretender to divine inspiration could lead a larger portion of the people with him, than those men whose pure and enlightened spirit was dictated

dictated to by the philosophic principles of liberty and universal justice. Indeed, it will generally happen that men who are capable of flattering the prejudices of those whom they wish to make instruments of their ambition, will be more successful than those upright individuals, who, disdaining to feed the expiring lamp of error, endeavour, with the strong breath of reason, to extinguish every sentiment injurious to human happiness.

We must, however, take things as they are. When a nation has the misfortune to be plunged into such a situation, it must seize all the advantages it can. It can have no other rudder than its own energy, and ought to have no other.— But it is necessary to dwell a little longer upon the character of *Oliver Cromwell*, he having been a principal actor in some of the most important scenes at that period exhibited on the theatre of Europe and possessing, even at this day, many enthusiastic admirers, who do not scruple to uphold him as the greatest champion that Liberty ever had in this country. I cannot see him in that point of view. I cannot read the historians of that day, without feeling a conviction that, at the latter period of his life at least, ambition became his predominating motive, to which he sacrificed every principle of justice and public welfare. Be this as it will, *Oliver Cromwell* was a very considerable actor in the revolutions of that period, and therefore his character and capacities form a considerable part of the argument to be brought forward on the present evening. What, then, was *Oliver Cromwell*? What was the size and capacity of his mind? and what were the projects in which he was engaged, and the nature of the system which he attempted to establish?—The acuteness of Cromwell's talents cannot possibly be denied. Every person who peruses the history of the period, will perceive that, through every stage of his political conduct, he always seized, and turned to his own advantage, every political event, whether in the first instance apparently prosperous or disastrous, that occurred. He had therefore a mind not only bold and enterprising, but capacious, versatile, and penetrating. It could seize occasions when they presented themselves: it could create them, when they did not. It could controul the genius of his enemies, and turn their projects, nay, even their very successes, to his own advantage. He was therefore never at a loss for expedients necessary for the propping of his own authority; and for supporting, so long as he himself existed to direct it,  
the



the system which he wished to support ; a system by which he became the first man in this country, and the terror of all Europe. But *Cromwell* was always obliged to depend upon the expedients of the moment. The whole *system* of his government—I should say the whole *history* of his government—for I mean to shew you that there was nothing like system in it!—the whole history of his government is nothing but a history of expedients, to which he appealed under the particular circumstances in which he was placed. He was now building up one sort of legislature, and then pulling it down : now setting up another, and then pulling that down again : then erecting a house of mock Lords, and then pulling them down again ; just as the exigencies of the moment prompted. Thus the *Protectorate*, or, as it is called, the Republic, continued as long as he lived, because the superior *activity* of his mind, the terror of his name, and that sort of fanatic eloquence which he possessed, kept all other persons in awe ; and, so long as the architect remained, the pillars of the revolution appeared to be secure, whatever change might take place in particular parts of the building. But *Cromwell* had not a mind capable of calculating upon the passions of mankind in the mass, nor of viewing in distant prospect the events and causes likely to influence the politics of future years : he was therefore incapable of forming a system that could be rendered permanent, and contribute to the advantage either of his own particular family, or of the nation in general. Accordingly, we find that this government of expedients crumbled into dust as soon as he expired : the plain and simple fact being, that every thing rested, not upon digested principles, which are permanent and durable ; but merely upon his shoulders ; therefore, of course, no sooner did he fall, than anarchy and debility were exhibited in every part of the state ; and the nation, destitute of able and popular leaders, and wearied with incessant fluctuations, was driven to seek repose again in its ancient despotism.

Thus, then, the revolution in 1649 was not the revolution of the great body of an enlightened nation, but a revolution produced in the first instance by a few intelligent minds, who stimulated the people to act upon principles which they did not comprehend, and was afterwards supported upon the shoulders of an individual, whose talents, though equal to the task of supporting the weight he had taken upon them, were not sufficient to frame a system by which that weight could be supported, when he was taken away.

There

There is another circumstance also of considerable importance, relative to the revolution of 1649; and by means of which *Cromwell* was enabled to usurp the dominion of the country.

Citizens, there are two species of popularity upon which power may be built, independent of that power which is vested by ancient opinion and hereditary succession: namely, the popularity obtained in the senate, and the popularity obtained in the field of battle. The former of these is obtained by the intrepidity with which the senator steps forward, upon all occasions, to strip the mask from pretended patriotism, to lay the axe to the root of corruption, and point out to the people the means by which that corruption can be remedied. The other kind of popularity is also exceedingly important in times of tumult and confusion: I mean the popularity of the soldier, who shows himself ready to shed his blood in the field of battle, in defence of his principles; and, feeling a conviction of the propriety of the cause in which he is embarked, proves, by his actions, that no danger can impede him, no prospects of death intimidate him.—Now, Citizens, these two kinds of popularity, for the benefit and advantage of the people, in times of revolution in particular, ought to be kept separate; for, when they are united, they throw so great a weight of influence into the hands of the individual so uniting them, that he always eventually possesses the power, and generally makes use of it, of overthrowing the liberty for which he appeared to contend, and usurping to himself that tyranny which in the first instance he professed to overthrow.

*Cromwell* possessed this united popularity. He had spoken for the people, and braved all the dangers of being their champion, in the senate; he had exposed his breast, with manly resolution, to the daggers of courtiers, the intrigues of crown lawyers, and the insolent usurpations of those who, because they possess all power, think they have a right to dispense with all law. In defiance of these, he had dared to step forward, to vindicate the insulted rights of Britain; and had been successful, in his senatorian exertions, in rousing the people to a manly and virtuous resistance. *Cromwell* also was a leader of armies: he fought for the cause for which he spoke: he conquered in that cause, and thus attached to himself the united popularity of the citizen and of the soldier; and thereby obtained an ascendancy which must inevitably endanger the liberties of a nation, and put the individual in possession of the means of grasping the tyranny.



Such, then, were part of the causes of the weakness of the revolutionary principle in *Britain*. Such were, in part, the causes of the power which *Cromwell* possessed, of usurping dominion in the country, instead of establishing liberty and justice.

Seeing, thus, what was the genius and nature of the revolution in 1649; and perceiving that it was propt in the first instance only by a few, and in the latter period only by an individual man, we cannot be surprized (the leaders of that revolution being cut off, and the great prop and support of it having fallen beneath the stroke of fate) that the revolutionary spirit became extinct; and that the house of *Stuart* was restored, with all those disgraceful appendages of unlimited power, which that house of *Stuart*, to its own destruction, exercised upon this harrassed and insulted nation.

Now let us consider the genius and spirit of the *French revolution*.—Having been so particular in describing the genius and spirit of the revolution in 1649, it perhaps may not be necessary for me to enter into the same detail with respect to the revolution of *France*. You will immediately perceive that the same causes which produced the revolution in 1649, did not produce the revolution in *France*; that the causes which enabled *Oliver Cromwell* to usurp a tyranny over this country, and make himself Protector, do not exist, nor ever have existed, at any period of the French revolution; and, finally, you will perceive this still more material difference, that the revolution of *France* is built upon the broad basis of public and almost universal opinion, and is therefore materially different from the revolution in 1649 in this country. We have therefore no foundation whatever to expect a similar catastrophe to that which took place in this country. Where causes are dissimilar, the effects cannot be the same; for effect and cause would be nonsense, if we did not admit that the one is the inevitable consequence of the other: that is to say, that every cause must be proportioned to its effect, and every effect proportioned to its cause; and that therefore, where the causes are different the effects cannot be the same, and where the causes are the same the effects cannot be dissimilar.

But I shall not satisfy myself with this abstract statement of the question. Let us review the nature and genius of the revolution in *France*; let us survey the nature of the causes which produced that revolution in the first instance.

The

The extensive despotism of France had its peculiar characters, originating from the circumstances under which it was placed. It was a despotism, in some degree, of a liberal nature. It was, it is true, very tyrannical as to its political operation; but it was, at the same time, in this respect liberal—that it encouraged the diffusion of knowledge, the cultivation of science, the improvement of literature; and accordingly, philosophical truths, and abstract speculations on government, were spread through a much wider circle in France, previous to the commencement of the revolution, than they were through this particular country at the commencement of the revolution of 1649.

I do not pretend to say, for I do not believe, that, at the time the revolution broke out in France, political information was as widely and as generally diffused as in this country at this time. If there had been, I believe, the calamities and mischiefs that have taken place in France would have been in a considerable degree avoided. But whether this is the case, or not, certain it is, that the despotism of France was not built upon as general an ignorance as the usurpations of the house of Stuart were in this country. Accordingly, when the Revolution broke out there, the light of political science flew with greater rapidity, and through a wider circle, than during the revolution in this country: for, when the middle orders of the people, or a considerable proportion of the middle orders, are informed, they quickly disseminate information throughout the mass. The whole mass being quickened, the whole mass acted—not for a faction, but for themselves. They did not blindly follow a few particular leaders, to whom they were attached: they were themselves the revolutionary principle; and they created the leaders who afterwards conducted them to the objects they had in view.

But this is not all. The *immediate causes of the revolution in France* were very different from those in England. A general bankruptcy had been produced, by unnecessary wars and profligate expenditure. No longer able to procure the revenue by which their system of tyranny was to be carried on, the government was obliged to appeal to the great body of the people, and set questions afloat, which, under no other circumstances, could have been so widely agitated. Another cause was, the universal detestation drawn upon the *French* royal family, by their extravagance, dissipation, and total contempt of the interests, welfare, and good opinion of the nation.



nation. This, also, was another cause which provoked general investigation. Profligacy and bare-faced vice, extravagance and unqualified dissipation, are circumstances which strike immediately upon every mind: they provoke enquiry, from the chateau of the noble to the cottage of the peasant. The very labourers in the field, the ploughmen at their homely toil, and the mechanics labouring in their shops, seize the opportunity of investigating the questions that result from this extravagance, and consequent dissipation of the public money.

There were, it is true, variety of other causes. It is not necessary, however, for me to run through them. Suffice it to say, the aristocrats of *France* themselves, who fled to this country on account of the downfall of despotism—even that raving and frantic aristocrat *Montgaillard* himself, acknowledges that the revolution in *France* does not depend upon the popularity of particular leaders: that it is the *Sans Culotism* (that is to say, the great mass of the people quickened to a sense and indignation of the wrongs and injuries they have suffered) which is the vital principle of that revolution, and that their most conspicuous leaders, and even *Robespierre*, might go to the guillotine, but the revolution remain unmoved. In other words, it is not the revolution of *Marat* or *Robespierre*—it is not the revolution of *Brissot* and the *Girondists*—it is not the revolution of the *Abbe Seyes*, or of *Tallien*, and *Bourdon of Oise*—but the revolution of the people. Their souls were altered, their habits were altered, their modes of thinking were altered, their capacities of acting were altered,—there was an universal moral revolution throughout the country; and, whenever an universal moral revolution takes place, no power on earth—no power of human combination, though leagued with the fiends below, (if fiends there are) can prevent political revolution also, or overturn a revolution standing upon such a basis. The whole substrata of political institution is in such case affected, and therefore every atom of political existence must be annihilated before that revolution can be destroyed, or the principle of despotism can be restored in a country where such events have taken place.

You see, Citizens, the aristocrats themselves are compelled to furnish us with these arguments. In short, if you wish to be a thorough democrat, read every aristocratic book that is published: Begin with *Burke's Reflections*, for I declare

clare to you, that it was not *Tom Paine* but *Edmund Burke* that made me so zealous a reformer, and convinced me of the necessity of annual Parliaments and universal suffrage. Read the aristocratic works of *Arthur Young*: take for their comment, if you please, the democratic works he published before he got a *place*, that they may explain each other. Read the works of the French Emigrants, and learn every word of *Montgallaird* by heart; and if you are not convinced by what he has written, to persuade this country to continue the war, that it is vain and fruitless, take my lungs for a pair of bellows to blow an alchymist's fire withal.

They may keep up, by their infernal system of bribery, the ferment and discontent in *Paris*, but if they had levelled *Paris* with the dust, that work will convince you their business would be yet to begin. It is impossible to tread out or exterminate the spirit of liberty, sometimes enlightened, and sometimes mistaken, but always warm and ardent, which glows in that country.

But, Citizens, there are other circumstances which tend to prevent, in the first place, the usurpation of a protector in *France*; and, in the second place, the restoration of royalty; namely, that in the whole progress of the *French Revolution*, the senatorial popularity has never been united with the military. No one man has been, at the same time, a great leader in the convention, and a great leader in the field of battle; and I have no doubt in the world but that the French people will take care that no one man ever shall concentrate in his person so dangerous an accumulation of political and physical power. This being the case, the popularity is divided, the attachments and influence are divided, and the consequence is, that there is no blind and implicit bigotry in the people, no unbounded authority in any leaders. Fortunately for the French nation they have got a little way past superstitious bigotry to particular names: their devotion is fixed upon principles. In those principles they may be sometimes mistaken: but their errors more frequently proceed from the passions and vices engendered by the old despotism, and which impel them to an opposition to their principles. But it is principle they are in pursuit of, and not individual men; and therefore standing upon the faith of no individual, no individual can betray them; and all that the powers in alliance can do is to hire so many men for the guillotine—bribe them to sacrifice their own lives, and endeavour to bring a stain upon



upon the revolution of France, which ultimately must be brought home to the person in whom that criminality originated: and woe to the man who shall be obliged to stand at the bar of his country and answer to the dread account.

But, Citizens, there is another circumstance that tends to convince me that royalty will not be restored in *France*: and much as I esteem and venerate royalty in *England*, I shall venture to declare that I hope and trust, for the welfare of mankind, that monarchy never will be restored in *France*. I will tell you why. I am going to broach a bold opinion: for it stands in opposition to the generally received maxim which people who call themselves philosophers, and gain credit as such by retailing stale maxims, without examining them. In spite of all the grave faces of these gentry, I shall venture to assert, that a country so large and extensive as *France*, never can be vigorously and virtuously governed but by a republican constitution.

Having thrown down this gauntlet, I shall now bring forth the weapon with which I mean to maintain my challenge. It has generally been upheld, that a republican form of government is only suited for a small territory. This maxim is, I believe, 2000 years old; but I could mention some palpable absurdities that are 5 or 6000 years old. I could mention some that, if you will believe the writers in support of them are 40 or 50,000 years old. But antiquity is no test of truth: add to which, words change their meaning in process of time, and the maxim originally being true, might become false in the new signification of the terms. What did the ancients mean by a democratic republic? Why they meant a country in which every individual citizen throughout the state assembled when public business was to be transacted, and voted and debated in his own person. If that is the only meaning of a democratic republic it is granted at once that the country must be very small in which it can prevail. But that is not the meaning of the word republic in modern acceptance: by republic we now mean a government so constituted and organised that the whole body of the people may convey their will to the heart and centre of government, and by means of representatives and properly appointed officers, conduct the business of the country according to the general voice of the people.

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Now let us examine what are the impediments to the establishment of such a government over a large territory. Let us next examine the nature of limited monarchy: and then proceed to this great question, whether limited monarchy can exist in a territory so large as *France*.

Citizens, perhaps I shall be obliged to be a little dry and prolix in making my meaning clear: for when we have new ground to tread, we must be more cautious than when we are pursuing the beaten path. But let us consider what is the nature and operation of government. Every territory consists of centre and circumference. If the circumference is small, a small power can be extended all round it: if the circumference be large and the government merely central, as is the case with all regal governments, a very great power must exist in the centre, or the extremities must be in positive anarchy. Well then, what do we mean by despotism? and what do we mean by limited monarchy? and what do we mean by a republic? By despotism we mean a government so energetic that it can strike even to death at any extent of the country, and produce obedience by terror. By a limited monarchy, we mean a country in which the governing or central power is restrained—that is to say, it is not so strong but what the other parts of the constitution, and particularly the great body of the people, can put a *peaceable, but yet efficacious restraint* upon it. For the monarchy is not limited with respect to its operations upon the people, unless the people have a power of checking and restraining it to a certain degree. To talk of a limited power that cannot be controuled, would be the most absurd nonsense imaginable. Well then, let us consider in the next place what a republic is. I have already defined it to be a government in which the power is diffused and extended through the whole body of the people. Every part of the state has of course its due share of governing power and principle essential to its own particular preservation: in other words, though for the perfection of its organization and unity of its operations with respect to foreign powers, it has a visible and acknowledged centre, the republican government is in fact omnipresent throughout the whole extent of the empire.

Having thus defined the *mode of operation* in the three forms of government, a little consideration would lead us to expect, and a little experience will convince us that the expectation is well founded, that under every species of monarchic government,



ment, the extremities or distant provinces of the empire must always be under a more rigid controul than the centre. Thus accordingly we find that a justice of the peace in a distant territory has more power to crush any individual or set of individuals, or to check the progress of investigation, than the whole Privy Council with all its powers and authorities at its back ever can exercise in the capital: accordingly you find that bolder enquiry and a more liberal communication of the heart exists always in the capital than it does in the provinces of every nation. This is the case however small the territory may be. This is the case even in the *British* empire, and accordingly we find that the judges of *Scotland* could dare to pronounce, and the aristocracy of *Scotland* to give countenance and occasion to the pronouncing sentences so monstrously illegal that the very hearts even of aristocrats in *England* revolted at them.

Why is this? Because public opinion rallies round the centre of government, and wherever public opinion rallies round, there will be a certain degree of check and controul upon the operations of government: for after all, it is impossible to prevent enlightened intellect from having its effect, whatever may be the disposition of particular persons to destroy that intellect, or prevent its dictates from being known.

Another circumstance is that a monarchic government, whether limited or absolute, acts in its proper person only in the centre. It may have, and it has its deputed authorities and delegated functionaries; but its *proper force* is exerted only in the capital and its environs. In proportion as government approaches to individuality, its native influence or authority must become confined to the sphere and compass of individual observance and exertion.

Well, then, it must delegate its powers to others, to act in the extremities of the country. It must have certain appendages, certain subordinate governors, who in the distant provinces of a large empire, must cause the law (or the will of the sovereign, where that happens to be law—and precious law it generally is) to be carried into execution.—Now either the functionaries in the provinces, must have a great degree of power, to execute the mandates of government, or they must have a small degree of power, and depend for the execution of them upon other means. Now if the delegated functionary has a small degree of power, it is evident

evident that the distant parts of the country will be falling into anarchy, because in the distant provinces he cannot have that assistance from the immediate interference of the regular government which may be necessary in particular extremities to enforce order or adjust the fit expedients to the times. If on the other hand, his power is unlimited, which provincial governors generally seem to think they are, then there are two dangers. Either he may make use of that power in such a manner as to oppress and destroy the province over which he domineers, and then you have a limited government in the centre only and a despotism in the extremities, or he may make use of it in so lenient and popular a way as to attach the province to himself; and then who shall answer for his loyalty.

That great power must therefore be checked and controuled by one of these two means—(I speak of an individual, but remember it is equally applicable where the power is delegated to a body of individuals, and branched into a variety of hands) either the check must exist in the central government, or in the people. If in the people farewell to your limited monarchy, for you have established separate republics, and every province must become in effect a separate and independent state. If, on the contrary, it exists in your central government, then what must be the monstrous tyranny of that government? What must be the system of spies, assassins, and informers which must be employed in every part of that province to enable the central government to crush and destroy its agent? and how unjustly must this tyranny be occasionally exercised?

The result I think of all these considerations is, that if you have a regal government, in proportion as that territory is large, the monarchy must become absolute. For the extremities must be strong, and to have the extremities stronger than the centre is preternatural and must lead to dissolution. The government must, therefore, be strengthened beyond the possibility of controul, where the territory is very large: for it must be either dismembered, or become an absolute and perfect despotism. But a republican government, when fairly constituted, does not exist only in the centre. It exists in every part and portion of the empire: every province has its power of operating with respect to those circumstances which depend upon the immediate existing circumstances in its own boundary. Every province has the power of com-



municating its will to the centre. The government of a well regulated republic is in fact an organization of the whole mass: it is not an oppressive weight laid, according to the anecdote of Alexander the Great, and the Indian philosopher, upon one part only, and which must therefore be laid just in the centre, to extend an equal influence to all the extreme parts: the weight and the elasticity are equal in all its parts. It is that sort of combination among the people, that sort of intelligence, communication, and organised harmony among them, by which the whole will of the nation can be immediately collected and communicated; and therefore there wants neither the tyranny in the distant provinces which must depress, nor the check and controul that would expose them to the probability of dividing.

Thus, then, is a republic the proper form of government for a large territory like *France*. And when in such a territory, a republican government is once formed upon right principles, it bids fair for immortality, especially now that by means of the liberty of the press, the whole must quickly become informed: for ignorance is the parent of a servile disposition; and wherever intelligence is disseminated, the intrepid spirit, can never be trampled down; and though a *Robespierre*, or any other tyrant, may domineer for a time, in the stormy æra of revolution, his usurpation must end in his own destruction.

Thus I conclude that the larger the territory the greater the necessity for a republican system, on the principles of liberty and equality. The walls of the ocean shutting us out from that extensive territory which *France*, seems destined to possess, if we have virtue, and a steady determination, while we revere the monarchy, and put up with the aristocracy, not to forfeit our democratic rights—we may preserve a limited monarchy. But in such a country as *France* there are but two things to choose, either absolute despotism, or absolute republicanism. Therefore, abhorring despotism from my soul, I cannot but hope, that *France* will, by becoming a free and independent republic, break the fetters of prejudice in which the understandings of mankind have so long been bound by the erroneous maxims of a too much revered antiquity.

\* \* \* No. 44, will contain the Civic Oration in commemoration of the acquittal of T. Hardy.

## THE TRIBUNE. N<sup>o</sup>. XLIV.

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A CIVIC ORATION *in Commemoration of the ACQUITTAL of THOMAS HARDY. Delivered on the ANNIVERSARY of that Event. November 5, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

IN the calendar of this country, a period more eventful cannot be found than the present, from the commencement of the year to the close. But of all the striking and important events the commemorating of which throng at this season, no one can, I believe, be singled out of greater importance to the liberties and happiness of the nation, than that which we at this time assemble to celebrate. It may be supposed, indeed, that it is natural for me to make this declaration, because it may be supposed that my own individual fate was in a considerable degree implicated in that of the man of whose acquittal this is the first anniversary. But, Citizens, it is not the fate of individuals alone, that I call upon you to regard.—It was not the fate alone of the brave and virtuous citizen whose effigy you there see depicted, nor of the twelve or fourteen men involved in the same ridiculous charges of high treason, but the fate of the human race, that hung in the scale of justice, upon that great and memorable day, in which a jury of British freemen, boldly declared that the virtue of enlightened men can be superior to the temptations of interest, the influence of power, and the sophistry of designing and ambitious ministers, and can, in bold defiance of every attempt of oppression and usurpation, administer justice according to the dictates of conscience. Human reason was itself under accusation, and the freedom of human intellect was proclaimed by the acquittal of a man whose only crime in the eye of persecuting grandeur was the virtue and firmness with which he dared to stand forward as the champion of the happiness and welfare of the human race. It is not then *Thomas Hardy* whose escape from persecution you come

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to celebrate—it is not *Horne Tooke*, whose talents and learning will be for ever admired, so long as mankind are capable of perceiving intellectual excellence—it is not the Political Lecturer of Beaufort Buildings, whose exultation is called for upon this event; they are but atoms; and nations and generations are in reality concerned.

We have the highest authority for pronouncing that the happiness and welfare of the human race was implicated in this decision; for Sir *John Mitford* himself, the solicitor-general for the crown, pronounced as much when he declared that our crime consisted in our “having carried our enthusiasm so far as to wish for the establishment of universal peace and fraternity.” And is there then the man who does not wish that this universal peace should triumph through the world? Is there a man who can deem it criminal to labour for this universal fraternity? Is there a man who could endeavour to proscribe this principle, and doom its apostles to execution and torture? Yes there were men—there were powerful combinations of men, whose principle is animosity, and whose harvest war and desolation; who would have hanged, drawn, and quartered us to prevent this peace and fraternity from being rendered amiable in the eyes of those whose ignorance, prejudices, and animosities support *their* grandeur. And right say the crown lawyers, for fraternity is a French word, and all French words are treason. Ignorant sophists! as weak in your data, as flimsy in your conclusions! The word is neither French nor English: its root is pure latin, and its meaning (widely different indeed from that old Norman French and Latin barbarous which throw a *venerable obscurity* over the proceedings of the courts) is neither more nor less than brotherly love and affection to the whole human race.

Is there then, I say, an individual who does not join in the triumph which we this day assemble to commemorate? Is there then an individual whose breast does not burn with an ardent desire to be guilty of that high treason charged against us by his majesty's solicitor-general? for if universal peace and fraternity were established through the world, remember what must be the consequence! No more should ploughshares be beaten into swords, but swords should be beaten into ploughshares: barren heaths would be turned into fertile pastures—and savage wildernesses would be converted into gardens of felicity.

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Is there an individual who can forget that when universal peace and fraternity are established, no more shall nation be plunged in war against nation, no more shall terror and destruction be the order of the day; but concord succeeding to devastation, the triumph of the arts, and every thing that can contribute to the life and happiness of man would supplant those sanguinary triumphs earned in the field of slaughter—and which, though they have been so often celebrated by ringing of bells, firing of guns, and every exultation which fiends could display at the misery of the human race, are in reality productive alike of lasting misery to the victor and the vanquished. We have been taught, indeed, much of national pride and of national grandeur; many fine swelling sentiments have been puffed about relative to what is called patriotism (namely attachment to the spot upon which we were born, and the desire of destroying all who have been guilty of being born in any other nation!) but one grain of genuine fraternity is worth all the national vanity, grandeur, and patriotism that ever existed. Let me put the question home—In what does the *Englishman* differ from the *Frenchman*? It is true, Frenchmen have of late *endeavoured* to make themselves more free than Englishmen: but it is strange, indeed, if to endeavour to make themselves free is a crime that deserves extermination; and if Britons who used to boast so much of their freedom ought to be the exterminators—Britons who themselves have been obliged to make revolutions for the sake of liberty, and who therefore ought to sympathise with those who labour under the same necessity.

Yesterday evening I met you in this place to commemorate an event which certainly justifies me in the last observation. For if we do not rejoice in the triumphs of liberty over tyranny—if we do not rejoice in the triumph of the *natural RIGHTS of MAN* over the absurd and ridiculous pretences of the *divine RIGHT of Kings*; upon what pretence can we possibly hold out that we are friends to the revolution in 1688? or that we exult that the House of *Brunswick*, and not the House of *Stuart*, is at this time upon the throne of Britain?

If, however, we revere and esteem the revolution in 1688, I think it is easy to show you, that you have much more reason to triumph and rejoice in the acquittal of *Thomas Hardy*, by which in reality a most black and wicked conspiracy, formed by bold, powerful, and designing men, for the purpose of



effecting a counter revolution, and destroying all the principles and advantages of the Revolution of 1688, and re-establishing all the despotism of the House of *Stuart*, under the corrupt and vicious reign of *Pitt*, *Dundas*, and their venal coadjutors, was effectually disappointed.—I say the reign of *Pitt* and *Dundas*: for they have assumed to themselves the power and pomp of royalty; and their evident and avowed partizans have dared to apply to them the language that ought only to be applied to the chief magistrate of the country.

I shall not repeat to-night (because the subject of to-morrow night's lecture will bring it more immediately under consideration) the language in which *Pitt* assumes to himself, as his own, the sentiments and expressions of the speech delivered from the throne, of which he made the chief magistrate the organ, but which he publicly avows as his speech, and thus assumes the dignity of the regal character, making his royal master but his puppet: whereas all that he has any constitutional right to claim is the *responsibility of those wicked measures* which may be adopted by that chief magistrate by the advice and influence of him and his wicked administration; a claim of which I trust we shall not be very much disposed to deprive him of the benefit. Neither shall I particularly dwell upon the artful and selfish precautions by which he has dared to proclaim that the life of his sovereign was less material than his own. But that his conduct did so proclaim is evident; for the ministerial papers in his pay, have declared that they had fore-knowledge of the tumult that was to happen on *Thursday* last; that they had seen seditious papers handed about, and that they had heard seditious expressions made use of to excite the populace to commit those outrages. What then was the conduct of *Pitt* under the circumstances of this fore-knowledge? He sent the king before him, as though he had been his running footman, to bear the fury of the populace; and an hour or two after the torrent of confusion was over, he sneaked privately to the House in a hackney coach. Was not this something like shewing that he was willing to sacrifice the sovereign to preserve himself? Am I not then entitled to conclude, that the usurping tyranny of *Pitt* and *Dundas*, and their coadjutors, was in reality to be established upon the ruins of the Revolution in 1688, if the conspiracy to make peace and fraternity high treason had succeeded? Happily, however, this conspiracy was disappointed;

pointed: for the Revolution in 1688, though it did not secure to us all that happiness which ought to be wished from such a great event, because it left the doors open for corruption and state intrigue, saddled us with an enormous debt, and plunged us into the damnable system of continental politics, thus in reality making *Great Britain* a province to the petty states of *Germany*, yet did that revolution produce us some great and glorious advantages, by establishing principles by which we are able to vindicate, upon indubitable grounds the doctrine of the *Rights of Man*.

But though the infamous doctrines of non-resistance and passive obedience were rejected: though a particular clause was made by which it was declared that it should no longer be a part of the oath of allegiance, that it was "not lawful in any circumstance whatever to bear arms against the king;" yet we find that a system of corruption was introduced, which step after step, endeavoured to undo all that our brave ancestors had done for us; and even attempted to make it high treason for a man to repeat in a printed resolution what it was that the revolution had declared: thus openly, and *vi et armis*, if I may so express myself, was that constitution attacked, which the assailants pretend to support. But before corruption proceeded to this open attack on the excellent principles upon which the constitution is founded, it had long been advancing by sly and insidious efforts to its object; first of all, it made feeble attacks under cover and disguise: by and by its enormity became so great that the enlightened part of the public could not but be in some degree awake to the danger. What was the consequence? Parties were formed in the houses of Lords and Commons, where pretended Patriots endeavoured to force themselves into place and power, by bellowing for the rights of the people; and exposing the corruption that had thus taken root among us. But the factions thus bawling for liberty, in time got seated in the place of power; and then they themselves became as bad as their predecessors, and proved to be the enemies of freedom instead of being the advocates of the people. They in their turn rioted in the product of that taxation imposed upon the hard-working part of the community; and fortified themselves in that authority when in, which they reprobated while out of office.

This scheme was for a long time pursued with considerable success: one party after another succeeding; one party after another was thrown into contempt, and the courtiers of yesterday



day were the patriots of to day, that patriots of to day might become the courtiers of the morrow. At last popular fury began to run high; the penal retrospect began to sound equal alarm in the ears of all parties, and it became convenient that the party that was to come in, should stipulate for an indemnity to those that were to go out; and should even give pensions to those who were dismissed from the polluted states of trust and power. Thus the only advantage derived from these changes of administration may be summed in this, that two parties are to be supported out of the public purse instead of one.

There are men it is true, so deluded as to suppose that putting out the *Pittites*, and putting in the *Foxites* would do some good. I believe it would be the greatest calamity that could fall upon us, because it would turn for awhile the current of popular opinion, which if, unbiassed by party influence, or party attachments, it continues to flow, not towards individuals, but to the rights of nature and principles of society, must end in the attainment of liberty, and the frustration of corruption and despotism.

Nay to such an height has this corruption grown, that when a minister takes his place, he is not satisfied with the patronage he is to secure to his family and friends, but he capitulates for an immense pension for life: as the present corrupt and vicious minister did when, at the footstool of the throne, he sold the swinish he d, whom his plans of parliamentary reform had deluded. Thus then the immediate effects of these contentions, were a change of hands and an increase of burdens. But there was a secondary effect, more advantageous to the cause of liberty, the struggle of contending factions awakened the people themselves to a sense of their own rights. They began to enquire; and found that all factions were sets of plunderers, who under the disguise of patriotism, sacrificed the people to their venality and ambition. When this conviction began to make its appearance among men of family and birth and education as they are called, the first expedient the factionists appealed to was bribery; and the men who made themselves formidable, were purchased at the expence of the public treasure; that they might burden the public with still greater incumbrances. But by and by the light of truth warmed the general bosom; and it was found that corruption itself could not purchase the great mass of the people. Out of this great mass, arose pillars and supporters for the great cause of human happiness. For the corinthian pillars of polished

polished society crumbling under the touch, the people were obliged to resort to their own rough quarry for materials for their building.

What then was next to be done? the great body of the people could not be purchased. There was but one way to stop the torrent of public opinion, and that was not by bribing those whose situation placed them below a bribe, and whose numbers made it impossible for bribery to reach them. The sword of legal as it is called, I shall call it illegal prosecution, was unsheathed, and terror established throughout the country. This, while the out-works of liberty were only attempted, was found effectual enough. Juries were packed for verdicts of sedition; and the lightest expression of disapprobation, nay even the most low and vulgar jest, was sufficient to condemn a man to the dismal dungeons of Newgate, to heavy fines, which he never could pay, and consequently to perpetual imprisonment. But this not being effectual, another step was taken. *In Scotland*, that seat—what shall I call it? that seat of liberty? no, that seat of law? no, that seat of base venality and corruption? no, for the people are pure, though the magistracy is corrupt; and it is only by a venal system of coercion that the great, virtuous, and enlightened spirit of that nation is prevented from showing itself, in a blaze of luminous splendour at this day. It was found easy in that country to find venal judges, who making their own consciences (if consciences they could be called) their oracle of law, dared to send men to *Botany Bay* for speaking boldly and honestly the language of truth and independance; though neither *Scotch* nor *English* lawyer has attempted to point out the statute they have offended, or the constitutional maxim they have violated. Having succeeded in frivolous charges of sedition, and libel, having from thence proceeded to send virtuous men into the most shameful banishment, they began to imagine that they could go a little further and glut their vengeance in the blood of their fellow Citizens; and they resolved so to: for they found that neither the dungeons of *Newgate*, nor transportation to *Botany Bay* could damp the spirit of virtuous reformers; but that on the contrary men had the courage voluntarily to meet what is called a tryal, even when they knew that they were condemned beforehand, and that the inevitable consequence would be that ignominious transportation, that felon-like punishment, which other virtuous Citizens, like themselves had already experienced. Another and more terrible effort was therefore to be made to crush the spirit of liberty. They  
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knew by experience that they could get *English* juries to find verdicts of sedition and libel upon the most frivolous charges, and *Scotch* judges who would dare in the open face of day, to pack and choose juries, and suffer the public prosecutor himself to be the nominator of those juries; and thus they had been enabled to transport men to *Botany Bay* as they pleased. But they found that the brave and virtuous Citizen *Gerald*, after the sentence passed against his colleagues *Margarot* and *Skirving* could despise their power, and go from this country to Scotland to stand trial at the same bar, where these colleagues had been condemned; nay I saw myself a letter which that Citizen wrote to the virtuous secretary *Dundas*, in which he requested him to let him be the bearer of his sentence, which he knew though to be pronounced from the scotch bench, was already fabricated in the English cabinet, and assured him that, strange as it might appear to him, who was a minister, he would *fulfil his promise*, and faithfully deliver it into the hands of the Lord Justice Clerk, who he knew would as faithfully pronounce whatever sentence the *honourable* secretary should send to him. Finding therefore that imprisonment and transportation were not sufficient to intimidate and check the exertions of men, attached to the sacred cause of liberty, the minister determined to try one step more, and to mark the foot tracks of his tyranny with british blood. That this tragedy might be acted with all due solemnity, nothing in point of preparation, overture, prelude, or embellishment was neglected. Public curiosity was awakened by a thousand artifices; the strength of the regular company was increased by recruits bought over at an extravagant price, from the troop of rival exhibitors, and the stage was decked out at a most extravagant expence. In plain english, the way to this daring attempt was paved out by the most extraordinary exertions. An essential part of our constitution, the habeas corpus act was suspended with a retrospective claim, that it might effect those persons, who had been previously caught in that mouse trap of the law; twenty or thirty men were torn from their families, doomed unheard to solitary confinement, their houses ravaged, by legalized ruffians, their wives and children insulted and beggared, and themselves oppressed with every species of wanton insult; and that the back ground or perspective might not want its sombre finishing, the minister dared to proclaim in the House of Commons, that though these might appear strong measures, that yet if these were not strong enough to crush, that enquiry, which now that he was in place he called

led sedition, but which, when he was out of place, he would have called the virtuous efforts of patriotism to reform an overgrown corruption, he would take still stronger measures, for that this desire of vindicating the principles of fraternity and peace must, and should, be suppressed and over-awed. What? Something stronger than taking away the best security of the personal liberty of Britons?—something stronger than imprisoning men by *ex post facto* laws!—something stronger than hanging men for speaking in favour of reform?—What could be stronger?—unless, indeed, he meant to hire a set of Croats, Hessians, Cossacs, Chouans and Barbarians, to cut the throat of every man who dared to breathe a wish favourable to the liberty and happiness of the human race? Did he mean that we should be sabred in our beds?—did he mean that our houses should be set on fire, and our children consumed in the flame?—or that he would hunt down the Jacobins, as he chuses to call us, with a proclamation similar to that of Lord Balcarras respecting the maroon negroes of *Jamaica*, offering a reward of 20*l.* to every person who brings in a man, or the head of a man—10*l.* for whoever brings a woman: and he who should bring in a sucking infant from the breast, alive or dead, should have 10*l.* more!!!—Did he mean to publish a proclamation that Jacobins and Maroons might be hunted down together, or any body else who did not agree with him in the complexion of their face, or the depravity of their principles? Whatever he meant, for the present, however, he was frustrated. He seized upon men, as the victims of his fury, with whom principle was every thing, and life nothing; and English juries respected their oath, and would not destroy them.

Yes, Citizens, such was the uniform principle these men evinced: and the evidence of this converted persecution and imprisonment into a source of proud satisfaction. After I had been four months locked up in my room, without seeing any sort of human society but my keepers, except, twice in a week, that my wife and my sister, and sometimes my aged mother, now no more! were permitted to converse with me for two short hours, in the presence and hearing of two jealous witnesses, we at last were indulged with the benevolent permission to walk, properly guarded, round the walls of the Tower: and there, though we were prohibited from conversing, we had the pleasure of seeing our fellow-prisoners: and so inspiring a sight never blessed my eyes before. Oh

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how I laughed at all the impotent malice of tyranny when I thus beheld the legible proofs of the unconquerable energies of human virtue; when I beheld in the countenances of *Hardy*, of *Tooke*, of *Martin*, of every one of my fellow-prisoners, even of the poor, unlettered, strong headed, honest clown *Lovat*, (now doomed by distress to fly from a sinking country) the unutterable triumphs of conscious integrity and virtue—when I read in every eye, in every gesture, that though they might die for their principles, they were warned by principles that can never die, how did I despise the weakness and blind malice of those who thought to extinguish by terror the sacred love of liberty and justice. Yes, Citizens, I declare to you that I read in the countenances of those men a virtue so sublime as stripped the scaffold of its terrors, and decorated the tyrant Death, in my imagination, with the symbols of glory and exultation: and though I wish not to be a victim (I would rather be the victim, however, of that cause than the betrayer of it) though I am neither ambitious of the crown of martyrdom, nor tired with life—for I profess myself to be a fortunate being in many of the circumstances which give to life its highest relish—blessed with a partner whose milder qualities soothe the hours of ease and leisure, and whose virtues animated my soul in the hours of persecution, and with smiling babes, likely, I hope, to perpetuate that zeal and love of liberty to which I am devoted, so that as far as relates to its social and personal enjoyments, I have reason to be so far satisfied with the world as it is, that I could wish to live in it to all eternity! yet when I think of the virtue and dignity of those men whose lives were implicated in this unfounded charge, and when I think of the inestimable value of the principle for which we are contending, to the universe, and to all posterity, death loses its terrors, and I could sing the song of liberty as I went to the place of execution, and smile at their gibbets, their axes, and their tortures.

Yes, Citizens, all demand my approbation; all claim the affection and zealous attachment of my heart: from the literary veteran, now enjoying his garden and his books in the neighbourhood of Wimbledon, to the poor and simple hair-dresser, who cultivates, at this time, the soil of *America*, and exulting in the virtuous conviction that he is now better employed in labouring for the necessaries that may sustain the life of a free people, than when decorating the heads of the luxurious and profligate, with that which ought to feed the hun-

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gry mouths of the poor. This season of persecution, instead of producing depression, gave strength and vigor to every mind.—The youth, *Richter*, became exalted to the philosophy of manhood; and I saw, with exultation, mixed with the evidences of his tender years, the firmness and sagacity of age, the triumphant enthusiasm of the patriot, and that magnanimity which would have become a Roman in the utmost purity and energy of the republic, and at that time of life when the heroic virtues are expected to be matured. Of the philosophic firmness, or the playful vivacity of the mind of *Tooke* no one will be surprised to hear; but a delightful conversation, stolen while our guards were drenched in slumber, I shall to the last moment of my life remember: and you perhaps will hear so ne account of it with pleasure. Our chambers, though not in the same house, were near to each other; and our windows were so situated as to afford us the satisfaction of a mutual view. From the bars and grates of these windows, at the still hour of midnight, the moon scattering her feeble light over the still surface of the river, and among the intersecting masts of the vessels, and affording us a feeble light, suited to the solemnity of the scene, we had been mutually attracted to enjoy the contemplation of that small portion of nature which it was still permitted us to behold. Finding ourselves in this situation, we began to unbosom ourselves with the freedom of men who, having nothing to conceal, had nothing to fear from what might be overheard. We saw, indeed, that the blood-hounds of power thirsted for our blood, and it was impossible to know what arts they were practising to secure the banquet: but exulting in the sacrifice we were probably to make, we rejoiced in the conduct we had already pursued, we compared our sentiments on that which was probably to come; paid the discriminating tribute of approbation to the memory of those murdered patriots who had been the pre-occupants of our dungeons, and comparing the fate of *Sydney* and of *Essex* (not that we gave credit to the reputed manner of his death) rejected with reciprocal indignation, the cowardly subterfuge of suicide; the venerable patriot closing the conversation with these emphatic words—*I will either live to be useful, or die usefully.*

But particularly, Citizens, I had an opportunity of observing the whole conduct and deportment of that virtuous, that simple, that uneducated man, the anniversary of whose triumph we celebrate this day, and whose fortitude, whose



generous love of liberty, whose enthusiastic feeling of the purity of his conduct and the justice of his cause, lifted his untutored mind far above every thing that is called philosophy and all that education can impart. Between our chambers there were, it is true, two doors, and two jealous guards to prevent us from that free communication which might have enlivened the hours of confinement, and made our dungeons agreeable. But there were moments when it was impossible every door should be closed and when we might at least behold the countenances of each other: and never saw I upon that countenance the least resemblance of fear; never saw I upon that countenance an expression which bore the least evidence of a wish to submit to base and servile concessions, to save a life which those concessions would have made worthless to society, and therefore burdensome to itself. So far was he from a disposition towards this—so far was self from prevailing over principle, that he exulted in his trial throughout, and on the very last night we spent in the tower, I heard him say, in a gay and cheerful manner, to his solicitor as he was departing, “Well, Citizen, if they do hang me, all I can say upon the subject is, that I hope it will do a monstrous deal of good to the cause for which I suffer.” That same dignity of soul attended him to the murky cells and dungeons of Newgate: and I have heard those persons who were confined in the same part of the prison with himself, for there were *virtuous* Citizens in every part and felon’s yard of Newgate—a receptacle first prepared that virtuous men might confine the vicious men within its walls;—but now vicious men put virtuous men into the dungeons which they themselves have a better title to occupy. I remember to have heard some of those virtuous prisoners confined in the same part of the prison where he resided, observe, again and again, that every morning as he went, with dignified firmness, to his trial, with dignified aspect he said to them as he passed “Farewel, Citizens! death or liberty!”

Catch the sound ye winds!—bear it to every corner of the world!—Let the motto be imprinted deep in the heart of man!—Let Britons shout and the world echo, *Death or liberty! Death or liberty! Death or liberty!*

Upon the last night that this untutored hero remained within the walls of that loathsome prison, I had the opportunity of observing his manly and unshaken conduct. I was sitting up, composing and correcting the defence, which I have

have since published, and which at that time I had some design of delivering upon my trial; when I heard the crash of bolts and bars, the rattling of chains and keys, and the creaking of doors turning heavily upon their hinges in the yard adjoining. I was at no loss for the meaning of all this: I knew the signal of the approach of Hardy, whom his usual attendants were bringing back under the window of my miserable dungeon. You may be assured that an awful emotion, an anxiety half selfish, half benevolent, was awakened in my mind. There is no disgrace in feeling solemn impressions upon solemn occasions. They who cannot do so, may sometimes display the frivolous levity of the jester, and sometimes the heavy insensibility of idiotism, but will never have that firm determination which is requisite to prevent them from disgracing important situations, or to assist them in producing those impressions which may be eminently serviceable to the public cause.

My miserable dungeon had no window for the admission of air: I was obliged therefore to remove a pane of glass to which I might occasionally creep, to inhale, like some noxious reptile from its hole, a little portion of the vile vapour which by circulating between the four-storied walls of a little square yard before my dungeon, had got rid of part of its memphetic qualities. To this hole therefore I crawled up to witness his *unexpected* return. I saw him surrounded by his keepers: and never in my life did I behold a countenance more divine—for what can equal the sublimity—what can command so much veneration as the expressions of a virtuous soul, struggling with the fury of powerful persecution—prepared for the worst, yet urged by the consciousness of a noble integrity to look forward with hope towards the best? I beheld this humble, simple shoemaker—this poor, honest labourer—for whom nature had done little—education still less, and fortune and connection nothing—but for whom principle—glorious and magnificent principle, had done every thing—whom integrity had rendered formidable—and virtue had exposed to persecution.—I saw him returning from the fatigues of the eighth day of a harrassing and tedious trial, the three last of which had been consumed in hostile harrangue and misguiding sophistries, to which no one was to be permitted to reply—I saw him returning from all this once more to his miserable dungeon, with all that firmness and complacency—all that proud exultation of soul which  
would



would have been looked for in the hero returning from some well-earned triumph. And when I asked him if it was not yet over? "No," says he, with the most undisturbed countenance in the world, "we are to have another day. Good night, once more;" said he, "good night." There was a significant exultation in the smile with which he accompanied this salutation; and if he had preached to me with the tongues of angels, exhorting me rather to die than shrink beneath the fury of my persecutors, or betray the virtuous principles I had adopted, he could not have used more eloquence to rouse to ten-fold energy the resolution I had taken.

Such were the men upon whom the present administration chose to make their experiment of destroying by terror and oppressive fury, the cause of liberty. Fools! fools!—Tyrannous corruption may sometimes destroy such men; but the very attempt is marked with the blind and desperate fury of him who shook the firm pillars of the temple at Gaza, but buried himself beneath the ruins. This general wreck was, however averted; virtue triumphed; and tyranny was disappointed.

It was found upon experiment, that though the outworks of liberty had not been guarded with that degree of caution they deserved, the citadel was secure, and the garrison were firm and determined.

A fair and honest jury—not fair and honest because the prosecutors had taken no pains in the selection—not fair and honest because all the magistrates who had any concern in impannelling them were impartial men, free from all bias or influence, and of too nice a conscience to suffer their jury books to be hauled over, scrutinized and cross-questioned, *ex parte*—not fair and honest because there were no persons dependent on the executive and administrative power upon the pannel—not because all the king's and queen's tradesmen were excluded, nor because there could not have been found in the country a great municipal officer who would have dared to say, "I will take care there shall be such a jury as " will answer the purpose of government; and that no man " holding such and such opinions, shall be upon it."—But fair, because the truth is that the security of a country depends not upon its laws, not upon the particular persons who administer those laws, but upon the enlightened spirit of the people: upon that degree of information which may be disseminated among them; and which may make them scorn

to do an unworthy action, when the life of a fellow being and the welfare of society hang upon the balance of their determination.

A fair, honest, and independent jury acquitted *Thomas Hardy*; and it is to commemorate the acquittal of *Thomas Hardy* that we at this time assemble. It is to commemorate that verdict which pronounced at once a dreadful decision against the authors and fabricators of charges of accumulative and constructive treason:—A verdict, also, which under the circumstances in which it was pronounced may well make us proud of our trial by jury, and jealous to preserve the utmost purity of that institution; since so long as its purity is preserved, the people have an organ powerful enough to reverse the hasty decrees of a corrupt legislature: and when that legislature, upon mere *ex parte* evidence, and the authority of garbled reports, shall venture to pronounce that a treasonable and detestable conspiracy exists (where treason in fact was never dreamt of) can stand boldly up to put their negative upon the assertion, and proclaim to the world, "*Legislators of Britain, ye have said that which is not!*" "You say there is conspiracy; but conspiracy is no where" "to be found, unless in the cabals and intrigues of those by whom this conspiracy has been charged."

But, Citizens, it is not enough that we have thus saved our liberties: we must learn how we are to use our advantages so as to secure the permanent possession of them. How is this to be done? By dropping the subject just where it is? No, no, Citizens: I tell you no: for though the juries have brought in verdicts of acquittal in favour of the *men* accused, the judges have pronounced upon the questions of *law*; and these decisions can yet be quoted \* upon future prosecutions to support the infamous doctrine of constructive treason. Nor is this all, Citizens: we have heard reports of late about another suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act. Citizens, *the Habeas Corpus act is no longer in existence!* suspended it has been in a most legal sense: that is to say, it has experienced that sort of mortal suspension which it was intended we should have experienced—it has been hung up—it is executed—it is destroyed—it is now no more than a cadaverous carcase! You are deceived, cheated, and deluded, if

\* One of the most extraordinary of them all has since been quoted and affirmed upon the trial of Stone.

you



you suppose it has, at this instant, any part or portion of that energy and vital principle by means of which it once protected the personal liberty of Britons.

You may think this a strange assertion: but what was the object of the *Habeas Corpus* act: think, also, what is our present situation; and you will then see that the assertion is true. The object of the *Habeas Corpus* act was to secure those of the people who were active and zealous in the defence of liberty, and were consequently obnoxious to ministerial hatred, from being rendered the victims of power, of tyrannical jealousy and suspicion: to prevent them from being imprisoned without having committed any of those offences for which the law would justify imprisonment; and to prevent them from being imprisoned under any pretence, for more than a limited time, without being brought to trial. The security then was this, that a man should know beforehand what he might do and what he might not; and upon what risk. If I do such and such an act, or bring myself under a reasonable suspicion, so as to be charged upon oath by two creditable witnesses—for that is the law—I shall be imprisoned for such and such a time; and then I shall be brought to trial. But if I do not do such an act, nor am not legally charged with such an act, I cannot be imprisoned; and if I am charged falsely, I must be tried in a short time, and upon proof of my innocence, be liberated again.

But what is the advantage of this act if it can be suspended at pleasure by a confiding majority who can “blow hot” and cold with the minister, and change every hue, fashion “and garb as often as he varies,” whenever the occasions arise which make its protection essential to the people? and if it can be suspended, not only with respect to its future operations, but with respect to the operation it should have had upon things past?

Suppose the minister should choose to take you all into custody as you go out of this room, and say that persons have been found in a room listening to public lectures, and therefore the constitution must be undermined, in order to preserve it: it is necessary for us to prevent the people from getting together in this manner, and hearing their rights, and finding out the causes of their grievances. But as we have nothing to charge against these men that the law of England calls criminal, if we bring them to trial, perhaps they will be acquitted, and then they will do us more mischief than ever.

ever. We must, therefore, suspend the *Habeas Corpus* act again, and then we can punish them with a long imprisonment for being so innocent that we dare not bring them to trial, and we will insert a retrospective clause that all persons taken when we had no right to take them, shall be detained now that we have made ourselves a right.—And so good-night, *Habeas Corpus* act.

How, then, is this to be remedied? Citizens, by parliamentary reform—for if you should ever be honestly and fairly represented in the Commons House of Parliament—if you should ever have a real House of Commons, in which every man should have equal weight in the political scale; and by the quick transitions of representation every man should know that the legislator of this year must be the subject of next, and that therefore the oppression he puts upon another he must endure himself, then, I think, we should hear no more of the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* act, or any other act meant for the security of the people's liberties. In short, it is nonsense to talk of a constitution meant to secure the liberties of the people; and at the same time talk of a small number of beings who can suspend that constitution at pleasure. You may suspend a functionary from his office, when suspected of corruption or perversion in the execution of that office; you may suspend magistrates—you may suspend agents—you may suspend a delegate—you may *suspend a criminal*—either a great criminal or a small one—but by what right, by what title can the delegates of the people suspend the rights, privileges and immunities of the people? The principal may suspend his employer; but it is a strange perversion, indeed, if the employer can suspend his principal. Yet is not this the case when a minister suspends the *Habeas Corpus* act? Does he not suspend the rights and privileges of those who are the authors of his power and authority? How, then, Citizens, shall we obtain this parliamentary reform—this restoration of the rights of the people so necessary for our preservation?

I have stood up in this place, week after week, month after month, till health and strength have sunk under the weight of my exertion, to intreat you to make use of no efforts but those of reason—to persuade you by the manly energies of mind alone, to persevere in that cause of liberty, which by mental exertion I believe you would be able to promote. But what is the situation in which you are at this moment plunged? Or rather what is the precipice upon the verge of which you stand? A notice has been given in the House of Lords that a bill is to be brought in *for the better security*



*of his majesty's government.* Why, Citizens, as good and loyal subjects we can have no objection whatever to the better security of his majesty's government: and if his majesty would listen to me, I think I could tell him the way in which he could better secure his government; and that without loading the statute books with new laws, or swelling the catalogue of threats and penalties: I would tell him to dismiss all profligate and usurping ministers; who prevent him from hearing the voice and sentiments of the people: I would tell him to reform abuses that exist in every branch and department of the state; but principally to lay the axe at the root of the evil, and reform the corruptions in the Commons House of Parliament: and when a prostituted and venal crew dared to tell him, "Sire, if you reform your parliament you are undone; if you suffer annual election and universal suffrage, the voice of the people would be heard within the walls of St. Stephen's, the throne would be ruined, and a republic established by its fall," I would entreat him to make this reply—"Sycophants begone! How dare you to pour the poison of such counsel into my royal ear: If I have deserved the love and affection of my people, then my throne will be built in their hearts, and will stand the firmer, the more those hearts have the power and liberty to express their feelings. The voice of my people would be heard in blessings—for it would be their interest to bless and love me; and the more audible their shouts the greater my triumph and felicity: If, on the other hand, I have deviated from the path of political propriety—if my conduct has not been such as is consistent with the welfare and happiness of my subjects, your's is the crime, and your desire to suppress the voice of the people is proof sufficient that you know it to be so. Therefore it is high time that I should give those subjects a fair, peaceable and manly opportunity of telling me my faults, or rather yours, that I may repair those errors and, if necessary, consign you to the fate you deserve. If it is in reality true, which you seem basely and traiterously to insinuate, that I am not possessed of qualifications for the situation I fill, that I have not those virtues which would make a crown and sceptre beneficial to a people, I ought to remember that I am but one of ten millions; and that ten millions are more than one, and dearer in the scale of justice and humanity, and that I ought not to set up my individual power in opposition to the welfare and happiness of mankind."

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This is a reply which if once made to a corrupt minister; and fairly published, and stuck about the streets with half the zeal with which some proclamations have been distributed, I will be bold to say, would give greater security to his Majesty's government, than any act of parliament which Lord Grenville has wit enough to make.

But we are told this bill is to prevent all political discussion.—Prevent all political discussion? Why, citizens, by what strange provisions can this possibly be done? Prevent all political discussion! Why, citizens, suppose they were to pass such a bill, and I were afterwards to advertize that I would eat hot hasty pudding upon Blackheath; and suppose 150 or 150,000 people were to assemble to see me eat hasty pudding, how could the government prevent them from talking politics while I was eating? But it may be said, that the minister is in no danger of this subterfuge, having taken special care that ere long we shall have no pudding to eat. However I will venture to say this, that *political discussion cannot be prevented*. They may shut up this lecture room if they choose. I do not think however they will. I am very much inclined to think that they have special hopes that I shall rant and roar myself to death here; and that therefore it is best to keep it open. But suppose they shut up this lecture room, suppose they shut debating societies; are not the coffee houses open? Cannot men talk politics there? Cannot you write? Cannot you publish? Yes, in spite of their inquisitions we can. I am told that at this time (I know nothing however about it) the *Rights of man* are in as brisk circulation as ever. I have not seen them you may be sure. I would not look at such a book for all the world; but I have heard that more compleat editions than ever were published in small before are to be had at very humble prices. It is true they never fell in my way: but when a man shuts up himself like the grand turk in his seraglio, and never sees anything but what his eunuchs and ministers shew him (and in my seraglio of books, I have neither any ministers or eunuchs at all) it is no strange thing if he knows not half of what is going forward. The plain fact is, the suppression of knowledge is impossible.

But Citizens suppose they should be able to prevent political discussion, what ought you to do then? Suppose they should take your reason from you, or at least the power of exercising it. Suppose the press were silenced, and the voice were gone. I am not capable of telling you what you ought to do; my function is only to reason: and when I can reason no more, farewell,

“ Othello's



"Othello's occupation is gone." But I can tell you what I am afraid the great body of the people *will* do. When there is no longer any political discussion to amuse their attention, when they are no longer permitted to open their ears to the voice of reason, they will do what our ancestors have frequently done in ancient times: they will turn their fury and revenge upon those who have been the instruments and authors of their oppression: and though *Pitt* may again have the reasonable audacity to turn his sovereign out, in the hour of hubbub and fury, that he may shelter his own head, yet perhaps if he should provoke popular indignation too far, and plunge the country too deep in distress and famine, he may find that there is not a den dark enough, a fortress strong enough, nor a recess secret enough to hide the oppressor from an infuriated people. But far, far from this country may such scenes of tumult be averted. So long as I am permitted to reason, I will endeavour to avert it. But I can steer you no longer than while they leave me the use of the rudder.

So long as this place can be open, open it shall be for manly discussion: and I will be as bold in that investigation as my intellects will enable me to be. I will shrink from no principle; for I have no principle that I need shrink from. I will advise you to do nothing but reason. But when they present me from reasoning any longer, when they make it impossible for me to give this advice, I must leave you to the dominion of your own feelings; and wherever those feelings may lead you to, I am not answerable for the consequences. The crime will be upon their heads. They are warned of their consequence. In the mean while Citizens, be assured that the spirit which has shewn itself in this country is not easily to be suppressed. Though *Hardy* stands forward in the memorable events of this season as the most conspicuous instance of patriotic fortitude and virtue, let it not be supposed that all the patriotism and fortitude of this country, were shut up within the walls of the Tower in 1794. If we had all perished by the circumventing arts of our persecutors, thousands would have been found to have trod in the same paths of virtue and resolution; for the manly firmness of the individuals, that spirit of boldness, which I trust, on the scaffold, as in dungeons and at the bar, would never have forsaken them, would have converted their sacrifice to a triumph, and our ashes would have been more formidable than our living exertions: and *death or liberty! death or liberty*, would have speedily become the maxim and the song of every true born Briton.

## THE TRIBUNE. N<sup>o</sup>. XLV.

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A CIVIC ORATION in Commemoration of the AC-  
QUITTAL of JOHN HORNE TOOKE,  
*Delivered on Saturday, November 21, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

ONCE more we meet, after a day of triumph to the public cause: for every day, since the present bills have been in agitation, has (in the mind of the philosopher) been a day of triumph, indeed: What hour has past, I might almost say what moment, since these bills were first announced, in which the execration of the public has not been clearly expressed against them, and in which the *honest determination of Britons, to preserve British liberty*, has not been audibly heard? Ministers have had the audacity to pretend that their measures were popular; and that the people wished such bills as these should be adopted by the parliament: and that they have been requested from various quarters to introduce measures of this description. Citizens, 25 millions of the public money are annually expended to little purpose, if those who have the expenditure, cannot purchase a few paltry petitions, to request them to adopt any arbitrary measures whatever, which they may be disposed to carry into execution; but they must indeed be lost to common sense, lost to principle, who can mistake such supplications to enslave a nation, for the voice of the nation. But it is not only upon such negative evidence that the friends of liberty rest on the present occasion. What populous meeting, what large assembly has been collected, which has not, in a clear and decided way, expressed its detestation against those measures for the preservation, as it is affirmed, but in reality for the destruction of this Country; and for the total annihilation of principles, which if destroyed, leave the house of Brunswick to seek for pretences upon which the revolution in 1688 was effected, through which they are seated on the British throne.

The meetings at *Copenhagen-house* I do not wonder Ministers should treat with scorn and contempt. They have been long in the habit of despising that class of men by whose useful labours

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they are supported, and who sometimes are asserted to be the only members of the *London Corresponding Society*. But, Citizens, the meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster it seems was also a meeting of the *London Corresponding Society*; or a *Copenhagen-house mob*, because persons who are house keepers and electors in Westminster chose to attend that meeting, who had not been ashamed to meet their worthy fellow Citizens at the meeting before described.

But was the common hall of London a corresponding mob, as they choose to call us? Was the meeting at *Chichester*, where in that small city between 5 and 600 persons have set their signatures to one of the most manly petitions that was ever laid before Parliament—Was this a *Copenhagen-house mob* also? Was the meeting at Bristol, so unanimous and decisive, a *Copenhagen-house mob*?—Were the freeholders of *Middlesex* who have this day assembled and given their almost unanimous reprobation of these measures, also a *Copenhagen-house mob*? Were they the hired retainers also, of the committee of the *London Corresponding Society*, and the Political Lecturer of *Beaufort's-buildings*?

Where is it that they have not been completely beaten? Even at their smuggled parish meetings, where they sent the parish officers round to particular houses, to pick out a few men and call them parishioners, they have in more instances than one been completely foiled: even their *picked men* abhorring such arbitrary measures. But when they have dared to meet the public, what then has been the sense of their meetings when called together? See in this day's paper the result of the meeting, called by a ministerial tool and hireling in the parish of *St. Martin's*, where a government contractor was obliged to set his name to resolutions, reprobating the measures of government. In *Surry*, the standard of liberty has been equally triumphant; and in every meeting at all populous, we find that the people are unanimously against the measures. Even the hirelings of government themselves, with indignant contempt, have spurned the messengers of the treasury from them, when they dared to suppose that any thing that bore the shape of man, would prostitute itself so much as to support measures, subversive of every principle of good government, and hostile to those foundations upon which the throne of the house of Brunswick has been established.

I am not a freeholder of *Middlesex* nor of any other place. If Mr. *Pitt* can carry his measures, we shall none of us be freeholders, even of our own thoughts. That great freehold,

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the right of personal liberty will be taken from us, and we shall be reduced to the miserable alternative of either rearing a brood of slaves in a country once free, or seeking for freedom in another land. The latter I shall not appeal to I assure you. When these bills first came forward, I said, if I perceived no spirit in Britons, if they were tame and lifeless, I would not be the fellow subject of a herd of slaves; but would seek my freedom in trans-atlantic regions. Britons have shewn that spirit, and while spirit remains in Britain, never shall this voice cease to be sonorous in the cause of liberty, never shall these limbs be carried to a distant country, to leave those who wish to oppress mankind, in possession of that territory which they would ruin and destroy.—But though I did not attend the meeting, I spent a part of the day in Hackney that I might learn, immediately on the spot, the result of this day's deliberations. The result has been, that not more than 9 hands were held up in favour of the measures; while all the rest were held up with zeal, with ardour and acclamation in reprobation of those measures; and, in support of those patriots who boldly dare to resist the torrent of oppression, even when it seems setting in with its greatest force and violence.

There are men, who when they cannot do all the mischief that they wish to do, are desirous of compromising and doing as much as the people will be tame enough to suffer. There is also a set of men, who when they find mischief is attempted in a bold and open way, are content to surrender half their rights, and to set themselves down with the negative satisfaction (or as Mr. *Windham*, perhaps, would call it the *negative success*) of suffering the enemy to advance only half as far as he intended. Half way men of the former description have been found upon the present occasion. That most upright magistrate Mr. *Mainwaring*, who scorns to stuff falsehoods and calumnies into his charges to grand Juries against men, who may afterwards be proved to be of characters at least as fair as his own; that upright magistrate finding the current of opinion universally in opposition to the bills, thought proper to propose modifications. The meeting however would hear of no compromises, and Mr. *Mainwaring* was obliged to pledge himself, that though he had voted with the minister on the first and second reading, he would give his negative on the third. Even the biscuit contractor in the City, came to the same resolution, I understand, yesterday. He prevented his blushes by rubbing his face over with a little of his own flour,



and told his constituents that as he now perceived the sense of the City to be decidedly against these measures, he, for the future should vote against them.

Mark the argument to be derived from popular meetings. The public voice frequently renders the public arm unnecessary: the best way to preserve the peace and tranquillity of society, and prevent the *possibility*, by removing the *necessity* of tumult and rebellion, is to place no barriers in the way of expressing the popular sentiment. After so many signal and decisive defeats, on the part of the minister, I cannot help entertaining some hope, that these bills will be rejected in the house of Commons, and I entertain a still stronger hope that if they are not, the bills and house of Commons and the minister, will all be rejected together by that king, who will not forget, though his ministers wish him to forget, that to the principles of the revolution he owes his crown; and that therefore it is neither wise, virtuous, nor prudent to violate the principles of that revolution. But we must not be too sanguine in our expectations, we must not, on the one hand, be sure that ministers ever will find an inclination of respecting the known sentiments of the people; neither must we, on the other hand, think that all is lost even if the bills should pass. There is a wide difference between bills being nominally adopted, and bills really having that support and countenance which will enable them to operate, as I shall shew you bye and bye. There is a wide difference between the obstinacy of a minister, and the power of a minister; and his very obstinacy may weaken his power, and betray him to his ruin: and that measure by which he meant to sacrifice the liberties of Britain, may lift up those liberties once more, and produce the renovation of that constitutional freedom, which it was his intention to annihilate. At the same time let us not forget that there have been other measures threatened by some of the supporters of administration. If the present bills pass into laws, the minister may find it necessary to abolish trial by jury: and as Mr. *Lushington* has uttered some sentiments in the house of Commons that look very much like threatening the abolition, or at least the invasion of that institution, and as we assemble together to commemorate one of those triumphs of freedom, which through the medium of a British jury was obtained, permit me to remind you what you would lose by suffering this palladium to be invaded, by calling to your recollection some of those historical circumstances, which attach to this glorious and sacred institution. There are men who pretend to venerate things

proportion to their antiquity, for my own part I am certainly not one of those, and if trial by jury were but 6 hours old, I should venerate the wisdom of the institution, just as much as if it were 6,000 years old. This institution has however in its favour not only the reason but the prejudices of mankind. It is one of the most venerable institutions in this Island. The records of history hardly take us back to a time when this trial by jury was not enjoyed by Britons. Our ancestors brought the institution with them from Germany. In the time of *Alfred* it was held in such high veneration, that judges who dared to pronounce sentence without the verdict of twelve men, were hanged by that patriotic monarch, as a warning to future tyrants, in whatever situation of life, not to dare to violate an institution essential to the very existence of freedom. This trial by jury has stood the shock of successive revolutions. After the Norman conquest it seems to have struggled for some time in obscurity: but it soon revived again. Even the Plantagenets and the tyrants of the house of Tudor respected this institution; and the beneficial effects of it are frequently to be found recorded in the state trials. There have been, it is true, some attempts, on different occasions, to subvert the utility of this institution, even by those who had not the courage openly to attack it. We find in a variety of devices hit upon, by tyrants of different ages, and various descriptions, to take from the people the benefit of this institution. Artifices have been devised in order to pick out such juries, as were most likely to be obsequious to the commands of a court. Bribery and corruption have been appealed to, and in the vile reign of *Charles* the 2d. (which Lord *Grenville* calls a reign of good times) in that vile, that odious, that detestable reign, judges dared to remonstrate and threaten jurors who did not bring in verdicts according to their good will and pleasure. I grant, that excepting the single instance of Mr. *Reeves*, whom, by and by, I shall have an opportunity of encountering at the general meeting of this district, and whom I shall charge to his face with some offences he does not think to hear of so publicly, excepting Mr. *Reeves* remonstrating with the jury when he wanted to indict this house as a disorderly house, we have had no man daringly wicked enough in our times to scruple about taking the verdict of a jury, when that verdict was expressed in clear, definite and indisputable words.

However Citizens, though remonstrances may not have been made use of, there have been men, in particular situations, who have undoubtedly made use of very curious artifices

to



to practice upon juries; there have been a variety of ways devised by which the purity of this institution has been attacked: such for example as instead of taking the juries fairly by rotation, or promiscuously, the clerk of the crown has been permitted to pick them man by man, from one page and from another of the jury book, and to impanel special juries just according to the manner that his good discretion pointed out; exercising that discretion, no doubt, with the purest zeal for justice, and being particularly anxious to put no man upon such jury, whose political opinions were hostile to the feelings of the man who was to be tried.

In defiance however of all these artifices, trial by jury has repeatedly preserved the liberties of the country. It has preserved these liberties, not only against usurping ministers, and usurping tyrants of the house of Stuart; but also against usurpers who having dethroned those tyrants, attempted to establish a new tyranny under the title of a protectorate. In the time of *Cromwell*, we have an instance of a virtuous and gallant patriot, Col. *John Lilburne*, who was four times tried for high treason, and died a natural death at last. We find in that instance, that juries could be found under all forms, and the prevalence of all factions, to resist tyrannical encroachments; and who disdained alike to be the instruments of the cruel malice of a *Stuart*, or the usurping tyranny of an *Oliver Cromwell*. *Cromwell* accordingly had the boldness, when he found he could not get juries, to pronounce just such verdicts as he thought fit, to abolish trial by jury, as to offences against the state; and to establish a High Court of Justice, as it was called, in which the judges pronounced sentence without any interference of a jury; and thus established a tyranny, which though it was endured a little while, could not have been put up with, because after all, I believe, in every age the principles of liberty will be found so deeply implanted in the British heart, that, whatever shape or form tyranny may assume, that spirit will resist the oppression, emancipate the people, and preserve the nation.

Remember then Citizens, what were the circumstances that led *Oliver Cromwell* to attempt the abolition of trial by jury. Compare those circumstances with the present times, and then lay your own hands upon your hearts, and ask yourselves this question, is it likely or is it not, that the feelings of Mr. *Lushington* were in perfect unison and harmony with the feelings of the minister, when he talked about introducing a bill into parliament, that should invade the sacred institution of trial  
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by jury; and thus weaken, still further, the security which Britons yet have for the enjoyment of their privileges and for their lives. Citizens be not led to suppose the parallel will not hold because *Oliver* called himself protector, and *Pitt* only calls himself first minister of the crown; names are nothing, and a man may hold an apparently insignificant office in the state, and yet, in point of real power, assumption, prerogative, and essential authority, be the absolute and positive sovereign, or at least attempt to be so. I will give you an historical instance of this, Citizens. The race from which *Charlemagne* descended in *France* were originally possessed of no higher power and authority than that of Mayor of *Paris*. The *Merovingian* race swayed an empty sceptre. They were carried in their state waggon on certain days, to the states of the kingdom, where they opened or closed those states, or gave 2 or 3 times a year perhaps, their nominal assent to acts that had passed. But the mayors of *Paris*, the real sovereigns, held the regal authority; and having handed down that authority from father to son, through 2 or 3 generations, one of these mayors, afterwards king *Pepin*, at last actually deposed the reigning family; assumed the authority to himself; and consigned the family he pretended to be the minister of, to the common fate of deposed Monarchs. You will see then, Citizens, that as a mayor of *Paris* could grasp to himself, by usurpation, the sovereignty of a great nation, so, also, a minister of state, in other countries, may perhaps keep his sovereign in chains and in bondage, and rule in his name, yet possess the whole power himself; and therefore, like an *Oliver Cromwell*, though more completely under a mask, may have the same interest, the same ambition to support by abolishing all the privileges of the nation which that *Cromwell* possibly could possess. I think I shall submit some reasons to you, to make you believe that similar views, under different appearances, are entertained by the one man, as were before entertained by the other.

What then was it that occasioned *Oliver Cromwell* to attempt the abolition of trial by jury? Simply this circumstance; that when he accused individuals of pretended treasons, juries were found to have good sense enough to discern the difference between pretended treasons, and real ones; and though the facts charged against the individuals were proved upon their trials, brought in verdicts of not guilty; and thereby pronounced the strongest verdict against the arbitrary men who had



had dared to drag innocent, nay virtuous individuals to the bar of *criminal justice*, and attempt to immolate them on the altar of their usurpation and ambition. Well, then have not *Pitt*, and the creatures of *Pitt* attempted to take away the lives of men upon factitious charges of pretended treason? Have they not lifted up their voice in a bold and open manner to say that such men have been guilty of such and such treasons, when there was no treason? Have they not proclaimed, through every corner of the country, that a detestable and treasonable conspiracy did exist? and have not three successive juries, to the confusion, and eternal disgrace of these false accusers, pronounced the accusation a falsehood, a forgery, and declared that no treason did exist; and that the men that were brought before them were no traitors?

On this very day we meet to commemorate the anniversary of the acquittal of one of the greatest men that *Europe* has produced in the present century: whom, upon a factitious charge of this description, the minister of this country attempted to destroy. He charged him with treason. What was the treason he had been guilty of? The treason was this, that he had remained firm and unshaken to those principles of reform which were necessary for the salvation of the country; and which the minister professed, till he found an interest in apostacy; and found it better to enjoy the profits of corruption, than to reform the corruption from which that profit was derived.

One act of treason and only one was *John Horne Tooke* ever guilty of; and that was, treason against his own good understanding in giving credit to the hypocritical professions of the most profligate, most faithless, and most prevaricating minister that ever yet was permitted to disgrace a country by the infamous projects, sanguinary sentiments, and prodigal waste of the public treasure, to the introduction of beggary, famine and universal disgrace. Once and only once, as far as I can perceive, was the man I am speaking of, guilty of inconsistency in his political conduct, and that was when he believed that a man could grasp the ministerial power of this country, under such a system of corruption as the present, without the power and influence of that situation corrupting him, if in reality he had been honest before. Thus was he induced to abandon that constitutional precaution, which is so conspicuous a part of his character. I believe if he had not confided so implicitly in this minister, that minister would never have had the opportunity he has since enjoyed,  
of

of destroying the rights and privileges of the nation, instead of renovating and restoring them. When this young cockatrice came into power, this patriot consented, and persuaded others to consent to the dispersion of the quintuple alliance, and popular associations of that time, and trust every thing into the hands of one who professed to be honest, and who it was supposed was yet too young to have drank of the poisonous draughts of corruption and deceit. He was disposed, however, as bad men frequently are, to be a punisher of that error by which himself had been benefited; and therefore when he found that this man was not disposed to become as corrupt as himself—when he found that he dared to tell strong truths in the open face of day—that he dared to the very face of the House of Commons, proclaim the corruptions of that house, and to compel them to enter upon their own journals this strong and decided fact, that “seats in that house are bought and sold with as little decency as standings for cattle in a fair,”—when he found he would thus persevere in telling truths disgraceful to the house they were applied to, and disgraceful to the people who suffered such things to be true, the minister found that with such men there could be but one effectual argument (the argument of the halter) by which he could be able to answer that logic which must make its way to general conviction, and produce ultimately that reformation so devoutly to be wished.

Well then, Citizens, shortly after the failure of his first sanguinary attempt, comes a bill into the House of Lords, and then into the House of Commons, to alter the law of treason. Now please to remember that *Oliver Cromwell* also altered the law of treason, but when *juries* came to try men of known virtue, and *John Lilburne*, in particular, *they rejected the new fangled law of treason*; though there was an express act of Parliament: Making thereby this strong and manly appeal to the common sense of the country, “the men who have made this law were never empower to alter the constitution, and therefore they cannot alter it, and as they have no power or legal authority to alter the constitution, constitutions being superior to the men who act under those constitutions, we shall abide by the old law; and we say—words are no treason at all: and therefore though your lawyers and your laws pronounce, guilty, we, who are tied by the constitution and our own consciences, pronounce, not guilty; acquit the men, and thus shew to the nation that juries are its hope, its trust, and its salvation.” Now perhaps the minister may not be



quite so ignorant as people, from some of his measures, would suppose him. Perhaps he may have read the history of England at college, when he could find a little interval between one bottle of port and another: and certain facts may have made some impression upon his memory.

May it not be probable then, that a something like this *Cromwellian* invention, hinted at by Mr. *Lushington*, may be a part of this regular and digested series of bills, which somehow or other it has slipped out, have been long prepared to secure this blessed constitution—every part of which may be destroyed for the sake of its own salvation. Citizens, reflect upon the situation in which you will be placed, if this trial by jury ever should be violated and taken from you—remember, Citizens, that not a man who now hears me, not an individual in the country can then, for one moment, consider his life as secure. A whisper, a suspicion, may separate his head from his shoulders; and even the most casual dislike of a tyrannical minister, nay, even the thirsting of a hungry set of courtiers and dependents, for the property of which the individual may stand possessed, may doom him to cruel execution, and bring beggary and destruction on his family.—Twelve men were included, about twelve months ago, in one indictment, with one list of witnesses, with one list of jurors; all these men had been kept for seven months in close confinement, calumniated, reviled, with every species of malignity, and without any possible means of replication or defence. Mark the language of the reports of the Secret Committees; reports stuffed with falsehoods, and in which no one fact is impartially and fairly stated. In which sophistry and glossing attempts at *Burkish* eloquence disguise and disfigure even the few truths brought forward. Mark the language made use of by the hireling scribblers of the *treasury*. Read their pamphlets—their newspapers—attend to the long and laboured orations of five, of seven, of nine hours, which were made by the counsel for the crown. Remember the gloomy malignity which breathes in every passage of them; hear Serjeant Adair, after the character that had been given by political friends, was more than substantiated by other persons, who had no political attachment whatever—hear him discolouring the facts and evidence that had been given, and saying, “What is character? would not *Cataline* have said thus “for *Cethegus* in the Roman senate, or *Cethegus* for *Cataline*?”—These were the words of a man who yet dares to behold the face of those beings who knew that nothing but malice, deliberate

berate wickedness, and the profligate design to pervert evidence, instead of representing it, could have dictated, under such circumstances, such a sentiment.

But, Citizens, there may be particular reasons, perhaps, why the pleader might be so bitter against that individual. I will tell you a story—At a general election in *Westminster*, upon the hustings at *Covent Garden*, a man came up to vote for the party to which a certain Serjeant was *then* attached. He was an Irishman, and the suspicion arose that he was a Catholic. That individual challenged him upon the subject. The Serjeant wanted him to take the oath.—“Friend, are you not a Catholic?”—“By Jesus now and what is it to you what I am?”—“Take the oath, friend, take the oath,” says this excellent Serjeant, learned in the laws.—“Friend, will you say upon your oath you are not a Catholic?” resumed the querist.—“Take the oath, friend, take the oath,” replied the Serjeant.—“I am astonished, Serjeant, that you should endeavour to make this poor wretch perjure himself: you who have sat upon the bench as a judge and ought to know the importance of an oath.” The poor wretch confessed he was a Catholic, refused to take the oath, and went away.

But whatever the motives, mark the conduct of the whole of the persons concerned in these prosecutions; and then put this question home—If an English jury had not stood between the prisoners and the prosecutors, how many of that twelve would at this time have been able to address a public audience? Put also another question—If they had gone to the scaffold, how many hundreds might have followed in the dreadful lists of proscription to which their condemnation must inevitably have led? If they were guilty many thousands would have been implicated in the same guilt? The example of France, and the blood-thirsty reign of *Robespierre* will convince all mankind, that when once you begin to shed innocent blood, or to shed blood for difference of political opinions or prejudices, there is no knowing to what excesses it may lead. Man is no longer master of himself—having once plunged into the sea of blood: he must wade to the opposite bank, or sink if he attempts to turn round.

It is by juries fairly and impartially chosen, it is by wise regulations to preserve that impartially, that the *liberties* and *lives* of *Englishmen* can alone be well secured; and I shall join sentiment with a learned bishop of this realm, that if



trial by jury were the only benefit that *France* had gained by its revolution, that advantage alone would be worth all the blood that has been shed in the struggle, and all the calamities with which that struggle has been attended.

But, Citizens, let us reflect whether there are not other ways besides *absolutely abolishing* trial by jury, by which this country may be deprived of its efficacy. Even if the present bills had been passed without any manly or general opposition, perhaps the minister of this country is not yet bold enough to have brought in *a bill for the total abolition of trial by jury*; nay, if I recollect aright—for it is very difficult to recollect what men have said upon subjects so extremely new and unexpected, Mr. *Lushington* does not threaten a bill for the abolition, but only for invading or restricting trial by jury.

I am sorry to say, Citizens, that within the last 30 years, too many bills of this description have already passed. You are not aware, Citizens—unhappily you are not aware of the strides which corruption and encroachment are silently making. You take it into your heads that it is not worth while to trouble yourselves about laws made to involve the fate of obscure and dissolute individuals; not recollecting that the policy of all bad governments is to single out the first victims of their usurpation in such a way that the people should think these victims not worth caring about; and then they quote the precedents thus established to destroy the best and most virtuous men in the nation. Thus, for example, constitutionally speaking, transportation is a punishment unknown to this country: I say constitutionally speaking, because *there may exist particular laws that are violations of the constitution*, and inconsistent with its spirit and original maxims. According to these original maxims, transportation was unknown to the law of *England*. How was it first introduced? As an indulgence in the first instance. Certain offences deemed capital felonies were declared to be within the line of mercy, if persons guilty of those offences would be transported to the colonies. Thus transportation was substituted for hanging. Anon upon the shoulders of that precedent you have acts for making offences not before punished so severely, subject to the punishment of transportation. What was the consequence? The people thought it not worth while to interfere in circumstances of this kind.—The principles of the constitution, it is true, were violated, but

but who were the men to suffer by it? Common plunderers and pickpockets. But there should be no distinctions of persons when principles are concerned: it is as fatal to the welfare and happiness of a nation, if the principle of liberty is violated, to destroy a pickpocket, as if it were violated to destroy the most honourable individual in the nation; for the precedent being once established, your principle is gone: thence forward you have a government of expediency instead of a government of principles; and a government of expediency will always find it necessary to adopt whatever measures are calculated to support the power of those individuals in whom that government is vested.

Having once established the precedent of transportation, by inflicting it as a punishment upon pickpockets and robbers, presently we hear of a Court of Justiciary where grave and learned judges confound the words banishment and transportation together, and where, if the offence had been in reality what it was called, they have only a right to banish the man who committed it, from the land of *Scotland*, they pronounce sentence of transportation. Men of the first characters and talents in the nation are sent fettered, among the very refuse of society, to the distant and inhospitable regions of *Botany Bay*, to spend their days in useless solitude, or wretched bondage.

Trial by jury has already too frequently been violated in a similar manner. I am not at this time prepared to enumerate all the acts made within these last 30 years, by which particular offences have been taken out of the hands of jurors, and the decision vested in the hands of justices of the peace. I may instance one, however, very recent: I mean the *partial requisition bill* passed by Mr. Pitt: a requisition bill more tyrannical I was going to say, but it has been sanctioned by the three branches of the legislature; and therefore I must reverence it—but if it were not so sanctioned, I would say that it is more tyrannical than the requisitions of *Robespierre*: because his operated impartially upon rich and poor, while this operates upon particular bodies of individuals; and thus destroys the great principle of *equality*, without which no law can command the veneration of mankind. In this instance two justices of the peace, and I believe, under some circumstances, one has a power to inflict fine and imprisonment; and in short, to decide ultimately, without appeal to juries, upon the *lives* of those human beings whom the magis-



magistrate may think fit to say have no visible occupations or means of livelihood.

How is a magistrate to know that any individual has not an honest way of livelihood? A man may have an honest way of livelihood, who ought not to be called upon to prove it. You ought not to associate with a man without knowing the affirmative; but surely you ought not to punish a man merely because you do not know the manner in which he lives. Is a justice, by himself, to say, "I see no visible means of livelihood you have, I therefore condemn you to the hold of a transport; and by and bye you shall be shot in defence of this just and necessary war." May he not say this of any one of you, or any body else he pleases? And what redress have you? I look in the act and find none: Nay, Citizens, churchwardens, overseers, and parish officers, by the arbitrary decision of a magistrate are to be fined and condemned to a month's imprisonment, without bail or main-prize—sent into a vile dungeon, to the destruction of their character, the ruin of their trade, and the anxiety of their families and connections, all without jury.

The instances also are many, I am told, upon good authority; not less than five or six and twenty acts of parliament made during the last 30 years, by which the decision upon particular charges is vested in two justices of the peace, and in some instances in one; which formerly were decided upon by a jury of the county. It is true that these are circumstances which to men in general do not seem to be worth attention, circumstances that affect disorderly persons vagrants, and offences which it is supposed none but persons in an *abject situation* in society will even be accused withall; but it cannot be repeated too often if you establish a bad precedent, by these instances you give a mortal stab to your liberty; because when once encroachment has begun there is no knowing where it will end. The first step towards tyranny is always insignificant and seems not worth attention; the next is a little bolder, but it appears no longer bold after we have been reconciled to the first; and so on. The second step you think not worth resisting, because you yielded to the first; the third not worth resisting because you yielded to the second; the 4th, 5th, 6th, till the whole object of oppression is at last obtained, steals onward, in the same way, and then you wonder how you have lost your liberties; and how your oppressors became so bold! Thus, if you dip your pencil in  
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some thin transparent colour, and then draw it over the white surface it hardly appears to have tinged the paper; the second time in reality makes no more difference than the first; nor the third than the second; and yet imperceptibly the paper is changing its colour, till, perhaps, from the purest white it becomes the most deadly black. So the purity of all laws may be taken away, first by one imperceptible, and then by another imperceptible shade, till tyranny darkens into its most infernal hues.

Abide then by principle, and say principle must never be trespassed upon; for if we suffer you to take the first step, it is impossible for us to conjecture where that step may lead. Let it be taken for granted then, that Mr. *Lushington* does not mean to bring in a bill to abolish, but to *correct* and *amend* (that is to say, to undermine and impair) that institution.

It may be practicable, perhaps, in the introduction of such a bill, to make a very plausible preamble, and assign a special reason, in which, under particular circumstances, trial by jury may be represented as having been found injurious to public happiness and welfare (*per inuendo*—profit and security of the minister!) though, take this with you, some of the acts before alluded to have not even a pretence in the preamble; but state, “whereas it is found more convenient “to place a further power in the hands of his majesty’s “justices of the peace,” &c. But what would the restrictions in this case relate to? To political offences undoubtedly. They, perhaps, would not fairly state to you that “whereas “it is found impossible by any artifices, tricks, or manoeuvres, to get juries to pronounce *verdicts of high treason* at the nod and beck of the minister *in cases of no treason*, therefore it is found necessary,” &c. They would find some other pretence, undoubtedly, to show you why it was proper that the judges alone should determine when laws are violated, and what the degree of punishment should be: but if such attempts are made, farewell to every thing valuable in trial by jury. I would not, in any one case, have the sacred institution of trial by jury violated; but the circumstances in which it would at present be attempted to be violated are those of most importance to society.

With respect to mere matters of dispute between one individual and another, it would, generally speaking, be matter of small consequence, otherwise than setting a bad precedent, whether



whether a verdict were pronounced by a jury or a court. It is not worth the while of a judge to act partially in a common action of debt. It is only in those cases where the crown (that is to say, the minister) is concerned. Those are the only instances in which the judge can be supposed to have any particular interest in doing injustice; and therefore it is in cases of this particular nature, that the trial by jury should be secured a thousand and a thousand fold more strongly than any other. So thought our ancestors at the revolution of 1688, and of consequence some of the first regulations insisted upon related to the positive challenge of jury, and the delivery of the lists of juries and witnesses, that the prisoners might be tried by fair and impartial men, and the crown be incapable of doing that which the very provisions of these virtually declare ministers will always attempt to do—*pack a jury* and pick out men to answer their purpose. Yes, Citizens, I say the statute 6 Wm. the III<sup>d</sup>. and another of Queen Anne, made for the regulation of trial by jury, in cases of high treason, and which pointed out that the individual accused should have the list of his jury, that he might have an opportunity of enquiring into the characters of his jury, is a tacit acknowledgement that ministers would, in cases of high treason, always endeavour to pack a jury; and that therefore it was necessary to give the defendant an opportunity of counteracting his machinations, or else the trial by jury would be of no effect. But little was it expected that a minister would ever be found profligate enough to say in the House of Commons, that there was a way by which they could prevent the individual deriving that benefit from the act which the act positively intended to secure.

These arguments I think will sufficiently show you how inviolably you ought to guard the institution of trial by jury, which your ancestors purchased with their blood as your inheritance and bequeathed to you; and if strong examples could be necessary to convince you, the event of the anniversary to which we are now arrived would be sufficient.—What were the attempts made by the late prosecutions? Were they not in reality attempts to make words treason? (Lord Grenville has since brought a bill into the House of Lords to make words treason!) Were they not attempts to make reformation a crime; and all attempts at political improvement an offence against the state? (Bills are now pending before parliament to make them such!) Why have such

such bills become necessary? Because Juries could not be found who would violate the sacred principles of justice. And thus arises an additional argument from those bills themselves, to show how anxiously you ought to guard the sacred institution of trial by jury: for if you once lose this, all that remains of British security is gone; and absolute despotism reigns over you for ever.

It may be expected perhaps that before I close this lecture I should make some animadversions upon the character, the anniversary of whose acquittal I at this time celebrate. But for my own part, it appears to be an act of injustice to attempt to pronounce panegyrics upon men so tried and known as the individual of whom I am now speaking. Thirty years and more, has the conduct of that man been at the bar of the public. Before I was born his voice was uplifted in the cause of liberty; and as far as I am acquainted with his political character, every hour, and every stage of his life, has been uniformly directed to one particular object. If it is necessary then for me to speak his praise, he has laboured to little purpose. If his character as a zealous reformer and a friend of liberty is not established, it is impossible that my weak breath can set it up.

Some notice however I must take of him; because very strong efforts have been made by the tools of corruption, to create every species of dissention among the friends of liberty; and, according to the calumnies of "*the True Briton*," I am to be expected to attack this gallant veteran, with all the shafts of puerile malice and selfish malignity; because he and I are no longer personal friends. But, Citizens, a man who has spent thirty years in the service of his country, has a hard fate indeed, if he is not to be permitted in the private intercourse between man and man, to follow his own judgment, or even his own caprice, without incurring thereby the imputation of staining those principles which, with respect to his public conduct, have always been upright, bold, and manly. It is the public I concern myself about; and not the private feeling. When the public cause is to be served, I am of opinion that men ought to have neither friendships nor resentments; but with respect to our bitterest enemy or our dearest friend, we ought to pursue the same line of conduct: to vote *against both* when they appear to be enemies to the liberties and rights of man; to vote *with both* when they appear to be promoting those liberties and those rights. We must not give way to those little trifling resentments, which



disturb the councils of the proud and selfish. Ever since I have come forward into life, my attachments and hostilities have been purely political. I knew nothing of Mr. Tooke but as a friend of liberty; as a friend of liberty I associated with him; as a friend of liberty I think I still know him; and as such I still love and revere him. Further than this, what has passed between individual and individual, is nothing to the public, suffice it to say that I know nothing dishonourable of him: and I am sure he neither can nor will pretend to know, nor to believe any thing disgraceful of me. With respect to personal unkindnesses, I can regard them with that *proud forgiveness*, which *never forgets* but which *abhors revenge*.

What then have the *writers of the True Briton*, or any other fabricators or swallowers of calumny to do with a separation between persons who never had any private tie of friendship, or private reasons for acquaintance. It is the virtue of the soul, not the caprice of the passions or the temper, that I esteem; and in the virtues of the soul I think I have never seen stronger excellence, than under the most trying circumstances, I experienced in *John Horne Tooke*; whose capacious mind beaming through his deportment, gave charms to the confines of the Tower—whose firm countenance, whose cheerfulness, and vivacity, when we have met in our walks round the ramparts of that prison, have imparted confidence and satisfaction to my soul,—and whose impressive words delivered through the grate of his dungeon, two or three days only before we were removed to Newgate, will vibrate for ever in my ears—will be cherished, I hope, for ever in my heart; and shall be recommended by me to all mankind, as the maxim by which we ought to live or die. “For my own part, said he, I know that these blood-hounds mean our death, I however am prepared. In these dungeons I feel nothing but triumph and pleasure. I am determined either to live to be useful or to die usefully.”

This maxim let me recommend to you, as the compass of every Briton's soul. Let us swear on the altar of our own hearts, let us publish to the world the solemn oath, that *we will either live to be useful or die usefully*; and ministers knowing that Britons have taken this determination, will tremble in the midst of dependent majorities; will shrink from the projects of despotism, nor dare to violate those sacred privileges which, guarded by this resolution, shall bloom through ages, and spread through successive generations.

*\*\* This work will for the future be regularly published every Saturday till the Volume is complete.*

## THE TRIBUNE No. XLVI.

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CIVIC ORATION on the ANNIVERSARY  
of the ACQUITTAL OF THE LECTURER  
[Dec. 5th.] Being a *Vindication of the Principles,*  
and a *Review of the Conduct* that placed him at  
the Bar of the Old Bailey. *Delivered Wednesday*  
*December 9, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

WHEN the Bills now pending before the House of Lords, were first introduced into Parliament, I had very little expectation that they would continue in agitation so long, and I therefore undertook, what I should not have undertaken, had I foreseen these delays, to lecture during their discussion every night. I have found, however, that these exertions, were more than my strength could bear, especially as the circumstances in which I was placed, and my desire of promoting the public cause in all possible shapes, rendered my Lecturing in this place the smallest part of my labours.

I had the satisfaction, it is true, of perceiving that my efforts were not thrown away; and this gave me nerve and strength to bear up under exertions which otherwise I could not have supported. I say those exertions have not been thrown away; for it is not by mere external circumstances that we are to judge of success or failure. Whether the impending bills are to be adopted or not, is not the only question at issue. If the bills had been adopted without a spirited opposition from the people, the downfall of British liberty would have been complete, despotism would have been the attribute of the cabinet, and to have talked again of the freedom of Englishmen would have been an insult upon that departed spirit which once animated the breasts of our ancestors, but of which, by the tameness of our submission, we should have proved that we inherited no single spark. If,

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therefore, we have raised the public spirit, we are not to despair of ultimate success, how much soever, for the present, the minister may carry every thing before him: for we cannot be so ignorant of what is called representation as not to know that it is in the power of the minister to carry every measure he chooses to run the risk of carrying. I, therefore, never had very sanguine expectations that any strong impressions would be made within the walls of an assembly where confidence is the general order of the day, and supporting the projects, views, and ambition of a minister, is called defence of the British constitution.

The exertions, however, which the people, awakened to a due sense of their danger, have made, deserve the attention of every individual; and he must be indeed lost to the principles and feelings which ought to warm a patriot's heart, who can repine at any loss of health or comfort he may have sustained in assisting that spirit of order and intrepidity which has shewn that the people are indeed the worthy descendants of a race of men, who in the field, and on the scaffold, shed their blood rather than abandon their principles. I could, therefore, without repining, still have continued every species of exertion if nature had not absolutely failed, and rendered it impossible for me so to do. Strength cannot be commanded; though spirit and animation may. The principles of virtue and justice will breathe the one into the bosom of man, but they cannot pour the other into the veins. I was therefore obliged to suspend my exertions, and to suspend them longer than I at first intended. I meant to have renewed them on Monday evening, imagining that I should by then have recovered strength enough to return to my duty in this Tribune: but Monday called for exertions of a still more important kind; and finding that I had not strength for both situations, I could make no question, whether I should meet the friends of liberty here, where it is my interest to meet them, or where I should be more useful, tho' I had no individual interest in attending: for though I hold it good and right, that every man should fairly consult his own interest, where the public cause is not injured by such consultation, yet I would efface that man from the tablets of my affections who could suffer his private interest to come in competition with his public duty.

I regarded it therefore as a great and important duty to my country, to pledge myself to measures which I knew to be  
right,

right, and to take the responsibility of principles which have eternal truth for their basis and liberty for their object. I was taken therefore from my sick bed to the public meeting, and I rejoice that I was so: I rejoice that we have given another proof that the classes of society who are stigmatized as tumultuous depredators, can meet in incalculable numbers, go through so much business with so much order, stay so many hours patiently upon a spot, be brought to such a sentiment of enthusiasm and genial unanimity, and then separate quietly to their own homes, to enjoy the consolation of a well spent day, not sullied by one act of irregularity, by one insult, or by one symptom of tumult or violence.

They tell us that the great body of mankind are not fit to be entrusted with their rights. Not even the minister himself has the audacity to say, in plain and direct language, that man has not a right to liberty and protection: but he tells us that the common people are lost in ignorance, lost in vice; that they are incapable of order; that they have not intellect by which that order is to be preserved; and therefore that to entrust them with the personal exercise of their rights would be in reality to violate the peace, and endanger the security of society. Now mark the competition: let any candid man, I care not of what party—I care not in what prejudices he might originally have been educated—let any individual who is capable of ten minutes cool recollection, I care not from what class of society, compare together the conduct of different bodies of men, and see on which side the edge of this argument cuts keenest. I will not exultingly appeal to the meeting at Groce's-Hall; I will not recal to your mind the disgraceful vulgarisms, the bear-garden vociferations, the blows, the violence of those who called themselves the friends of property and *order* at that meeting: I will only call back your recollection to the meeting at Merchant-Taylor's Hall, which has been called one of the most respectable meetings that ever was held. What then was the conduct of the merchants, bankers, and traders, who met at Merchant-Taylor's Hall? Was not Mr. *Favell* treated with so much rudeness and violence that he escaped with difficulty from personal mischief! Was not every man who held up his hand against the resolutions which the commercial connections of Mr. *Pitt* brought forward, treated with insulting grossness?—Were not threats—was not opprobrious language—were not mean distortions of face, which would have



discredited Bartholemew fair, exhibited by the first merchants in the city? I will not name them, though I could; for I marked them—I will draw a veil over the failings of men who one day or other may reflect how much they degraded the dignity of human nature.

Compare this conduct with the conduct of the thousands tens of thousands, I believe I might say fifties, or hundreds of thousands, without exaggeration, who attended the meeting at the Jew's-Harp House; compare the conduct of the persons who taking possession of large halls, and proud in their opulence, arrogate the sole right of opinion, with those honest and industrious labourers who assembled together in such multitudes without committing one act of depredation, listened to the sentiments delivered to them with the silence of a marshalled army, and after adopting the resolutions proposed, returned to their homes with the tranquillity of Arcadian peasants, who had met upon some festival to celebrate the returns of an abundant harvest, rather than crowds assembling under the smarting goads of oppression, to testify the strong feelings which as men they entertained, and to which as rational beings they had a right to give a tongue.

Are these the men, fellow citizens, are these the men who are too ignorant to be entrusted with their rights?—Are these the men whom you fear should commit depredations upon your property? Are these the men whom you tremble at as plunderers and assassins? Are these the men to protect yourselves against whom, or rather to deprive whom of their natural and constitutional rights, you league yourselves together with an administration the most corrupt that ever existed in the world? with men who have taken more bold and daring strides within a few years to the violation and abolition of our constitutional liberty, than ever was taken by all the ministers of the House of *Stuart* put together—nay, than all the usurpations of *Oliver Cromwell* added into the bargain!

Is it then to rob these poor men of their rights that you consent to abandon so large a portion of your property in unnecessary taxation?—Had you rather be at the mercy of such sycophants as surround those pools of corruption, the scenes of ministerial cabal and intrigue—Would you rather, I say, surrender all your liberties and all your rights to those ministers, than grant to these people such laws and such an exercise

ercise of their rights as would ameliorate their condition, lift them and their poor infants from misery, and enable the industrious labourer, by the sweat of whose brow you eat, to reap from his labour the comforts that should recreate him in the short hour of relaxation?

Citizens, I have gone into a digression from touching upon this string: I cannot well avoid digressing when such a string is touched. I know there is, at this time, but one powerful enemy to the liberties, the happiness, and the peace of the country.—*Prejudice* is that enemy: an enemy cherished by that mistaken pride which occasions men of different classes and descriptions of society to keep themselves aloof from those whom they conceive to be their inferiors: forgetting that he who bears the stamp of humanity is a man and an equal: and that superiority alone belongs to virtue and well-applied talents.

Break through these bounds—lay prostrate these prejudices—unlock the proud portals of your hearts, and let your poor neighbours in. There is room enough for all: and if you consult your own happiness you will be anxious that the chamber shall be full of guests. There every human being ought to be present when you propose regulations for the public. When you talk of happiness, you ought to mean the happiness of all: when you talk of prosperity, you ought to mean the growing comforts and advantages of all: when you talk of protection and preservation of peace, you ought to regard as much the peace and protection of the cottage as of the palace; and to be as anxious that the laborious tenant should sleep in tranquillity upon a well-covered bed, as that lords and mighty potentates should be undisturbed by the clamours of ruffians, whose violence their splendor may sometimes allure.

Act upon these principles, and you will feel no more dread of restoring mankind to their rights: be dictated to by these rules, and you will no more be afraid that universal suffrage should produce universal anarchy. You will no longer think it wise to surrender your own liberties, in order to prevent the common people from enjoying the exercise of theirs.

This principle has, I trust, been long impressed upon my mind; and as I profess upon this evening to give you a vindication of the principles, and a review of the conduct that placed me at the bar of the Old Bailey, let this be the test by which you try both me and my persecutors. If you perceive that the principles of those of the opposite party are  
more



more friendly to the happiness and general welfare of mankind, cleave to them: it is your duty. If, on the contrary, you should find that my principles and conduct are more likely to promote the general happiness, cleave to the principles that I deliver. All I ask is, examine fairly for yourselves: trust not the second-hand reports of hired assassins, who though they have not the courage to wield the dagger, have the baseness to stab with the pen. Judge for yourselves; dismiss the prejudices which great names have imposed upon you; and then see whether the principles of the *London Corresponding Society*, or the principles of the *Society at the little white house on Wimbledon Common* are most worthy of your approbation.

On the anniversaries of the acquittals of *Thomas Hardy* and of *John Horne Tooke* I delivered lectures in commemoration of those events. Another acquittal was added to these in the same series of events, and it appeared to me that, though it would be too much like egotism to trace precisely the same path with respect to myself that I had done with respect to them, yet there was something, perhaps, like affectation, in passing entirely over the subject. I therefore determined, on the last Saturday evening, which was the anniversary of that acquittal, to have entered into a vindication of the principles for which I was prosecuted, and for which, if they are wrong principles, and principles are proper subjects of prosecution, I ought to be prosecuted again, for I have not abandoned them. Ill health prevented me at that time, and I now come to perform the task. I have laid down in my exordium the principle upon which mankind ought to act. It will be for you to judge whether this is the right principle, and whether it has been the actuating principle of those men with whom I am connected; and, if it has been, whether there was any justice in the late persecutions, or is any justice in the persecutions of the present time:—for this is a persecution of a much more bitter kind than many of you are aware of:—a persecution that will cut off the very means of subsistence from hundreds, yea from thousands; and annihilate the property of others, who by an *ex post facto* law, are to be deprived of the resources of which former exertions had put them in possession. What then are the principles upon which mankind ought to act? Are they—or are they not the principles of universal benevolence—the principles which teach us to regard the welfare of the whole human species?—Need I argue this part of the subject?

Citizens;

Citizens, There are many maxims and many sentiments which in my early youth I adopted from education which experience and reason have taught me to abandon. There is one principle, however, among many, that is to say, the principle I have just laid down, which I had the good fortune also early to imbibe, which I have never seen reason to forego. I abandoned a lucrative profession, flattering at once to any popular talent I might possess, and to every ambition which the youthful mind could entertain, because that profession appeared to me radically vicious; to be a system of intrigue, of chicane, of sophistry, and of plunder; which bears the venerable name of law, but which is nothing but one continued series of fraud. I looked for principles and I found quirks and quibbles. I found a few good maxims indeed, hid beneath huge piles of contradiction and absurdity; but consistent principle I could not find. I looked again for justice, and the security of civil and natural rights; but I found chicane, cruel oppression, falsehood, speculation and swindling, stamped with the venerable name of authority. I found that the rich man could make use of this instrument to destroy the poor; and that the poor man, against whom, perhaps there was no real pretence of justice or equity, might be crushed beneath its weight, and doomed by it for the sin of poverty to the horrors of a jail: that an individual, whose only blame was the *negative vice* of not having fortitude and resolution enough to starve while he could obtain a little bread upon credit,—that this poor being, full, perhaps, of virtue, full of noble sentiments, weighed down with affection for a family too numerous for him to support, under the cruel circumstances in which society had placed him, must be thrown into a miserable jail to swell the grandeur and consequence of the *venders of Justice!!!* There must he languish like a common felon:—nay worse than any felon *ought* to be treated. It is enough, surely, for the greatest offence to deprive a man of life. Cruel treatment, and the damp, unwholesome gloom of odious dungeons, whatever pretences national egotism may find to support the boast of a humane system of jurisprudence, are a species of torture after all. Yet the poor individual, who had been guilty of no crime whatever, is to be surcharged with a weight of law charges, fees of office, and perquisites of courts, to swell the consequence, to repair the carriages, to pay for the ermine and scarlet robes of the professors of this *science*, as it is called; and there (poor miserable debtor!) is to languish in cheerless desolation.

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I confess, Citizens, I soon found a conviction, that I must either get rid of my principles or never get my bread by such a profession; and I therefore abandoned it, and cherished those feelings, as I ever will, because they are the only feelings that distinguish man from the brute. They are the bonds of society, the links of social happiness and virtue, and without these, however great, however affluent, however proud we may be, we shall be nothing but a band of depredators living upon the spoil of human happiness.

The same principle that induced me to abandon this lucrative profession, led me afterwards to join the *London Corresponding Society*. I had learned in two different schools—the school of the law, and the school of *personal misfortune*, that mankind are regarded in the present state of society, not according to their virtues or their useful talents, but according to the property they possess; that luxury and rapacity are at once the title deeds of respect, the patents of precedency, and the admitted claims of power. The swindler in his elegant apparel, riding in his coach, or living in his palace, is welcome to every man's table, and receives the homage of the circle of Society in which he falls. For him the door of preferment is open—he may become a magistrate—a minister—a peer. He may oppress his poor, honest, industrious neighbours with impunity, and his very varlets—the meanest ministers of his lascivious vices, may insult and trample them in the security of his protection; and yet he will be received and *esteemed* in the *best company*. But I have seen talents that might have illuminated the universe—virtue that might have warmed the world into benevolence, treated with scorn, because the shoes of the possessors were a little fractured, and their coats had not the gloss of novelty upon them, but like the principles of the wearers, were somewhat out of fashion.

Popular discussion, which some people seem to suppose so very unfriendly to the principles of order and good government—Popular societies, which *Mr. Pitt* was once so very fond of frequenting, that he might learn how to display that glossy eloquence which was to be useful to him in the day of power, but which, since the power has been obtained, he has become so anxious to suppress, lest they should open the eyes of mankind, and detect the fallacies of his nefarious conduct—These societies were to me a school at once of youthful emulation, and, I believe, of virtuous instruction. I fairly confess that I learned in them my alphabet of political  
and

and intellectual truth. Open discussion, and the course of reading and enquiry it stimulated me to pursue, soon convinced me that in the institution and distributions of society there were radical errors which gave to men of property a consequence to which mere property never can be entitled; and which depressing the great body of the people, made every accumulation of national wealth an accumulation of national calamity and misfortune. I had soon occasion to reflect, that the very words grandeur, dignity, power, affluence, political consequence, and the like, were nothing more than pompous sophistical terms to describe the beggary, want, and ragged wretchedness of the great body of the people. Led, from this conviction to make further enquiries, I soon perceived that the real evil was that a few grasped to themselves all power and right of making laws, and that practice, consonant to what theory would have suggested, proved, that those who make laws will make them for their own advantage; and will be very anxious to persuade those who have no influence in making them that "they have nothing to do with the laws but to obey them."

It wanted not the holy inflation of a pair of lawn sleeves to reveal this: neither ghost need have come from hell, nor saint from heaven, nor *bishop* from the—*pulpit*, I was going to say—but I forgot that *bishops* seldom get into the *pulpits*—I ought to say, nor *bishop* from the *House of Peers*, to tell us that as soon as any set of men get it into their power to dispose of the rest, so soon will they become monopolizers and tyrants; and so long as this monopoly continues, so long will the great body of the people, thus precluded from all opportunities of vindicating their natural rights be deprived of every comfort and advantage. Do you want proofs of this? Look to the general complexion of society—trace the footsteps of travellers over the whole universe, and tell me whether every country, every town, and every village, in torrid or in temperate zones, is not eloquent in support of this important truth. Where liberty flourishes—that is to say, where the people are consulted in making the laws, or have a voice of restriction and censorship, there, I will grant, as in other governments, bad laws are sometimes made; and those bad laws again repealed: In other governments bad laws are very frequently made, but it is very seldom that any but good ones are repealed. In these free, that is to say, popular governments, however, bad laws are sometimes made one day and



repealed another; but the laws in general have always a just bearing towards the equal distribution of the advantages which accrue to the state. I say the equal distribution of advantages; and, mark my meaning: I do not mean an equalization of property. We hear, indeed, of one country where this equal distribution, or rather annihilation of property took place: the little Grecian republic *Achaia*. Historians tell us, indeed, that it was a happy country; a truly magnificent country;—that small as it was, it frequently held the balance of justice between the surrounding nations; and that its reputation for inviolable integrity was such, that all the nations of the earth were anxious to have their quarrels settled by the arbitration of this republic. But we know nothing of its institution; we know not by what means this absolute equality was effected. As far as I am capable of judging, the only consequence that could be produced by an attempt at this sort of equalization, in the present state of society, would be havock and assassination, equally destructive to the security of rich and poor.

Having said thus much, I think I shall not be suspected of being one of *Reeves's associators for propagating the notion of levelling property*. When I speak of the equal distribution of advantages accruing to the state, I mean that when the rich merchant, the great landed proprietor, and higher classes of society, are enabled to enjoy more luxuries, and live in greater pomp, the tendency of the laws and institutions of society ought to be such, that the labourer also will have his proportion of the advantage; eat with more comfort, sleep in a better cabin, and be enabled to give his offspring a better education, and a better knowledge of their rights and duties.

I soon perceived, and I am now still further convinced, that the very reverse was the case in Britain. I challenge every man who hears me—and I am not speaking to an unenlightened and uninformed auditory—I can perceive countenances, many of which I know, and in many of which, though I do not know them, I can read the lines of intelligence and education. I know that many persons listening to me are not of my political creed; that some are even hostile to those pursuits of reform to which I am pledged: but I challenge any man who hears me, and I will bear interruption with patience, to detect my fallacies, if the statements I am about to make are not accurate. I challenge them to turn  
over

over the history of the last 400 years, and deny, if they can, this bold assertion—that during the whole of that 400 years, the condition of the lower orders of the community, that is to say, of the industrious poor, has been growing worse and worse. I challenge any man to contradict this truth, that 300 years ago a man could earn four times as much bread and meat and beer, four times as much comfortable cloathing, four times as comfortable a cabin to rest himself in, and four times as much of all the comforts and necessaries of life, by the produce of one day's labour, as at this time.—You tell me, perhaps, that I am misled by the mere knowledge of the growing price of the necessaries of life, and do not consider the growth of wages which common people receive. Citizens, I am not so deceived: I have probed the evil to the bottom: I say not one word to you now which I have not proved in former Lectures, from authorities the most unexceptionable—from aristocratic writers: from historians, calculators, and printed documents of those very periods to which I allude: and I aver, that when a man got only twopence per day, he could, with that twopence, buy four times as much bread and meat and beer, as he can with the price of a day's labour at this time.

What is the consequence then? Mr. Pitt has abused our understandings and our patience with insulting panegyrics upon the happiness, prosperity, and glory of the country. He tells you our situation is improving, our credit is growing. Suppose it were: that credit is a bubble by which the rich man, perhaps, may for a while banquet his imagination; and by means of which he may procure an enlargement of his luxuries; but it is air too thin for the poor man to feed upon: he gets no part of the advantages of it. If he gets but a fourth part of the necessaries by his labour which he formerly got when the glory and happiness of the country was so much less, then I say he has reason to curse your honour, grandeur, and opulence, from his very heart, and pray for that state of beggary and bankruptcy, which your folly and desperation is bringing, perhaps, faster than you suspect.

Mistake me not, however, I am not desirous that a nation should not be flourishing, great, and opulent. I love the splendor of arts, and the refinements both of science and innocent luxury; and I exult when I behold splendid buildings—till my exultation is checked with the painful recollection



of the means by which this splendor is procured. By what means have these stately palaces been built? I cannot help exclaiming. Are not the the stones, as it were, the bones and limbs of those lower orders of society worn out in incessant toil? Is not the cement the blood of those who have been sacrificed to rapacity and ambition? I know, however, that the country might, in reality, be in a state of much greater grandeur; the arts might be better rewarded, science be better improved, and every thing useful and ornamental to mankind might be advanced to a much greater degree, by that liberal distributive principle of which I have spoken, than they can possibly be by the present system of corruption, venality, speculation and depredation, which the minister is carrying on, and which—(mark me, I pray you, I have no enmity to the man, no personal revenge) and which every minister must carry on, however pure, however virtuous his first intentions, till you have a radical reform of that *system* of corruption which compels ministers to be scoundrels, that they may keep their places,

When these principles were impressed on my mind, by comparing various facts, I thought I perceived where the evil lay. I thought I perceived one great maxim of political justice which, if recurred to, would put an end to all the miseries and misfortunes of the country, and promote our rival grandeur and prosperity. This I thought to be a constitutional maxim. It was a maxim, it is true, of that constitution established at the revolution of 1688; not a maxim of that constitution which Mr. Pitt and his adherents have been fabricating by new treason laws, penal statutes, extension of excise laws, and the destruction of every privilege of the people. The maxim was that *laws to be binding upon all, should consult the benefit of all, and that laws to benefit all, must be made by the consent and appointment of all*: for as man, like all other animals, has a principle of selfishness in his mind, it follows, of course, that whoever make laws will do the best in their power to make such as are most for their own advantage. It follows then, of course, that if the laws are made by only a part, the advantage of only a part will be consulted: but, if they are made by the consent of the whole, this very selfishness compels them, to the best of their judgment, to make such laws as are impartial and just: because it is only by impartial and just laws that the benefit and advantage of the whole can possibly be promoted.

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Tell me not then of the fallibility of human reason. Reply no more with that stale stuff which the advocates for existing abuses are always bringing forward—"O you would subject the world to the dominion of human passions: human nature is full of prejudices; and if you entrust the formation of laws to the great body of the people, the laws will be dictated by passion and prejudice." Very true, take the whole of your premises for granted. But if laws are to be made in such a manner, that human passions, prejudices and errors, are to have no share whatever in the making of those laws, will you be so good as to tell me, by what sort of beings those laws are to be made: Not by men, of course. By whom then? By the brutes? The elephant with his proboscis, and the boar with his tusks would, perhaps, make almost as good legislators: as those huge Bohemoths of the political world, the lawyers, with their probosces and tusks, the reports, commentaries, institutes, and the like, with which their jaws are armed: but if the aristocrats approve these *sweeping statutes*, let them alone be resigned to their dominion. Who then are to make them? Are they to be made by God? Citizens, we know nothing of any such Being but through the intelligence of the human organ. If we believe in the existence of such a Being, we must admit that man is, in reality, the organ of his will: *Vox Populi, vox Dei!* the voice of the people is the only voice of God that we have ever heard or shall ever hear. In fact you are in this dilemma: laws must either be made by men with all their passion and prejudices about them, or by some being not human.

The bishop of *Rockefeller*, perhaps, would pretend that the 10 commandments are laws sufficient to govern a great empire: which seems a necessary part of his argument: for then indeed he might say, that these laws not being made by the people (that is to say, by men, but by God) the people, that is to say, men, have nothing to do with them but to obey. But if we want more laws than these (and if we do not why do we not burn the statute books) then we must be satisfied to have our laws made by men, taking them to be such imperfect, prejudiced, and impassioned beings as we have always found them.

But mark who these arguments come from. They come from a set of men who, I suppose, by libelling the understandings of every body but themselves, mean to insinuate, that they have no prejudices, no passions, no errors of their own, and that therefore if the laws are made by them, they must



must be perfect both in wisdom and virtue. Has Mr. *Pitt* no passions, no appetites? I do not mean to appeal to the female citizens. His passions in this respect, it must be admitted, are kept in excellent decorum: the only prejudice he ever shewed in their favour was to give them a cup of tea a little cheaper than before, and he did that in so bungling a manner that the East-India Nabobs were soon the only gainers by his gallantry: unless indeed it may be thought something in their favour that he shut up the windows with a commutation blind, and lent the veil of darkness to the blush of love. So much for the immaculate, *heaven-born* minister. I dare say the fair Citizens would rather have a minister of more mortal clay, whose services would not be of such a maukish warm-water description.

But, Citizens, though he may not have the passions of gallantry, look in his face, has he no passions less worthy of a great statesman, and less consistent with that clearness of head, that coolness of judgment, and that moderation of temper, without which it is impossible for any man to be a great minister or a virtuous man. Go to the Bacchanalian orgies, if you please, at that little white house alluded to before; remember the figure he and his dear colleague have sometimes made in the senate of their country; and then let me ask you—what foundation have these men to the claim of infallible judgment—to exemption from all those frailties and appetites that lead men astray? Have we not reason to believe that in the midst of scenes of festivity and riot, plans of wars, campaigns, and military projects have been formed, which being begotten in inebriation, have reeled over half their course, and then fallen in stupid debility, sprawling in the mire of disgrace, to the infinite gratification of their enemies, and the confusion of their friends. Do we not know that the senate of our country has waited till the fumes of tokay and champaign could be partially discharged from the brains of those men who say we ought not to be consulted in making our laws, because we have passions and appetites, and are subject to all the prejudices of human nature.

But, Citizens, the real question is this:—admitting, as the basis, that all human beings are full of prejudice and passion, is it better that your laws should be made under the auspices and subject to the censorship of the great body of the people, who, though they have passions and prejudices, have an interest in doing right? or should they be made by a set of beings who have the same passions and prejudices, and who, in addition  
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to these, often will conceive, and sometimes have an interest directly opposite to the general happiness? This must be the case with all monopolists. The interest of a part may be hostile, and, in many instances, must be hostile, to the interest and welfare of the whole. The interest of a cabinet, for instance, always must be that a country shall be at war; because war increases patronage, increases power, increases military establishments, by which the liberties of the people can be trampled down, and the authority of ministers promoted. In short, war makes the situation of ministers, in every way, more advantageous; and extends the circle of their patronage an hundred fold. Therefore it is the interest of ministers that you should always be at war. But what is the interest of those whose property is to be destroyed, whose industry is to be suspended, and whose lives are to be sacrificed by war? Ask the poor wretch who lies bleeding upon the earth what interest he had in the quarrel for which his blood is shed! Ask the poor widow weeping over the fatal paper which bears to her the intelligence of her husband's death:—mark her anguish when she beholds those orphan babes who have lost a father and protector, and who are to be thrown upon the wide world to earn their bread by cringing beggary, and receive, as a boon, the scanty pittance of charity; ask her what interest she had in that war which has deprived her of all comfort, all support, all the pleasures and domestic hopes of conjugal virtue? and then tell me, if you can, that the interest of the minister and the interest of the people are one.

If I were to choose between the two, I would prefer even *all the mad extravagance of rude, unshapen democracy* itself, to those laws and institutions which are made by a minister, assuming to himself all the state of a Grand Vizier, and reigning in all the mystery of a Turkish divan, whether he executed his will by a troop of *Jannissaries*, or of *soi disant* representatives of a disfranchised people. With such beings *confidence* may supply the place of principle, and the desire of promoting their own particular interests and ambition may appear better than the approbation of the people, or the welfare of mankind. To look for equal laws, therefore, from such a source, is to look for more than human virtue. But though I say this, I do not wish for the wild, ungoverned fury of crude democracy. Though I shrink not from the name of *Democrat*, I know that an absolute, unqualified democracy can only exist in a very small territory: because a democracy in reality means a government in which the people themselves,

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in their aggregate capacity, possess the *actual exercise* of the governing power: the whole people being convened together to give their sanction to all laws and regulations. I believe that large multitudes are incapable of making laws wisely and justly. I am sure they are incapable of deliberation and *preparation* of business. I never yet saw a literary production good for any thing but what was framed in silent meditation and retirement. It may afterwards be adopted and submitted to the consideration and judgment of as many people as you choose; and popular approbation can alone give currency to its claim of merit; but it must first have been matured in privacy and retirement. So in legislation there must be a deliberative faculty to prepare, a compressed wisdom to digest, as well as a general will to adopt: and, in large states, this general will cannot decide by actual accumulative right; because all cannot be assembled. I am, therefore, in the strict and proper sense of the word, an *Aristocrat*; that is to say, I am for an aristocratic government, such as the philosophers of old have defined. Consult the wisest writers of antiquity. They tell you that an aristocracy is the best government. What do they mean by an aristocracy? A government, they tell you, by the wisest and the best. But they had not found out the way in which this government of the wisest and best was to be truly instituted. They thought, I suppose, that the few speculative philosophers educated in their schools must be the wisest and best; and that when the certificate of their college was shewn, all mankind were to acknowledge the qualification. But the truth is, that to have a government of the best and wisest, you must appeal to popular election, on the principle of universal suffrage: for who can have so much right to be considered as the wisest and the best, as those whom the united voice of a nation has chosen and elected as such, and, therefore entrusted with the government? Thus, then, is the principle of universal suffrage a realization of that perfection which the ancients dimly descried, but which they knew not how to establish. Nor is it necessary to prove to you that every man elected by popular choice is sure to be the best and wisest man that could be pitched upon. It is sufficient that mankind will be disposed to elect such persons, because it is their interest so to do. I believe in 9 instances out of 10 their judgments will be tolerably right: and where they are not, annual election will give them timely opportunities to correct the error. In short, however imperfect this criterion, there is no other to which we can appeal. Popular assent is  
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not infallible, but it is, after all, the only test of truth we can come at; and, therefore, though fallible, we must be content with it; and all we have to do is, to keep it as clear as we can from the interference of corruption, and to dissipate as fast as possible, the clouds of ignorance.

That our present mode of election insures us always the wisest and the best, no man will pretend. Take any of the Parliaments which have existed during the last 50 years (the present excepted) and no man will pretend that the members have been all the wisest and best that could have been found. No man, I believe, can be so hardy as to say seriously that the senate of any country, in which the general voice was consulted, would not have been filled with a greater number of wise and good men, than the present system ever assembled at any one time (the present Parliament alone excepted) within the walls of St. Stephen's.

These are convictions and principles which a series of enquiry has impressed upon my mind. Parts of these convictions and principles were in my mind when I first united with the *London Corresponding Society*.

I perceived that the happiness of mankind was neglected; that the advantages of a few were preferred to the welfare of the whole, from a due respect not being paid to the suffrages of the people: that the voice of the nation had not a faithful organ, such as our constitution designed, and such as our constitutional writers describe when they (and *Blackstone* in particular) affirm, that "laws to be binding upon all must have the assent of all;" that "no law can be made in this country, without consent of the King, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Commons in Parliament assembled;" and when they lay it down, as a general principle, that "taxation without representation is robbery." Let me ask how many millions in this country may, at this rate, consider themselves as robbed every time the tax-gatherer comes to their doors?

I conceived that the popular societies aimed at a reform in the Commons House of Parliament: and the first society to which I belonged, the *Borough Society*, held out no other object; and, therefore, approving its principle I joined it.—The use that was made of a sort of grammatical inaccuracy in one of the declarations of that society during my trial at the Old Bailey, I shall not dwell upon. If our liberty is such an empty bubble that a man's life may be put to the hazard, because he has not, with critical acumen, examined the force



and bearing of every substantive, adjective, particle, adverb, interjection, and the like, which happens to be introduced into a paper in favour of which he holds up his hand, woe to the poor man that has not studied *Lowth* and *Lilly*—and farewell, say I, to British Liberty.

After the dissolution of that society, the next I joined was the *London Corresponding Society*. To that society I zealously attached myself, because I perceived in it a body of good principles; which to me are dearer than all the grandeur and wealth which makes men so proud, but which never yet contributed to make them wise or virtuous.

I do not say, because a man is rich, he is neither wise nor virtuous: but I will say that if the rich man is wise and virtuous, he would not be less virtuous and wise if he were poor. His virtue and his wisdom I esteem; not his property.

Woe to that country in which too much veneration is entertained for property: not that I would have it violated; I would have the most insurmountable barriers placed round it. I know such barriers, taking men as they are, to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace and order—for the protection of the lives of mankind. But no respect for opulence!—It is one thing to place a barrier round property; another to put property in the scale against the welfare, and independence of the people. If any thing can make property insecure, it is the wicked folly—the overweening pride—the tyranny of putting it in the balance against population—against the rights and happiness of the many. If you once impress the terrible notion that laws are made—not for the advantage of the many who earn, but of the few who enjoy the property, you hold out a temptation so strong as almost to amount to a justification for the violation of that property.

I have no objection to any man's greatness; his wealth; his power; or his grandeur: but I remember an excellent discrimination of *Horne Tooke's* upon this subject,—at one of the meetings of the Friends of the Liberty of the Press—"I have no objection that other men should be greater and more powerful than myself. But if they make their greatness an instrument to destroy my littleness, by God (said he in his emphatic manner) I would brain them as I would a mad-dog." This is the voice of nature. It is expressed, indeed, with bitterness. But so long as mankind have energy, sooner or later oppression, if continued, will work up every mind to this bent. For my own part—I am anxious to impress the sacred love of order; and as one of the first principles of order,  
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every man's just possessions must be regarded as inviolable. At the same time I feel no difficulty in declaring that if men of property will be so mad, so profligate, as, in language and conduct, to say "so long as we preserve our property, you shall have no rights," I will answer, "by God I will have my rights, and you shall not make your property a strong box to lock them from me. I do not wish to touch your property; but you shall not, therefore, rob me and my fellow-citizens of that which is more valuable than all the property in the universe."

The way to protect property is to make just and equal laws. The way to protect property is to make men see that it is to their advantage that property should be protected: and I believe all just and fairly acquired distinctions of property are in the present state of human intellect promotive of general happiness. They increase industry. They stimulate to acquisitions which otherwise would be neglected; and therefore tend to the improvement of society.

These principles I have zealously upheld. These principles I defy any of the base, hired, ministerial scribblers, who spit the venom of their calumny against me, to find one spot or period of my life that has belied: and it is easy to learn whether my boast be well founded.

I was born near this place. My residence can be traced, with ease, during every part of my life; and if there had been any disgraceful particulars in my history, the industrious malice of faction need not have been confined to general abuses. There have been times in which poverty and misfortune frowned upon my youth; and in which I had to struggle with the bitterest disadvantages to which an independent spirit could be subjected; when without a profession, (for I could not eat the bread of legal speculation) I had to support an aged mother, and a brother robbed of every faculty of reason. Yet upon all these embarrassments, when a debating society and a magazine brought me together but about 50 or 60*l.* a year, I look back with the proud consciousness of never having stooped even to a *mean* action. Search then, probe me to the quick: and if you can find one stain upon my character, think me in reality a plunderer and an assassin: but if you cannot, what will you think of a profligate administration, with more vices upon their heads than I have words to speak them—what will you think of their assassins, and the black epithets and calumnies with which they have so incessantly pursued me.



But it is criminal, it seems, to receive an emolument from the exertions I make in this place. Let those who make the charge shew whether it be more honourable openly to receive the wages of public instruction, or by apostacy, oppression, and corruption to plunder a groaning country?

These, then, are the general principles that have actuated my conduct. These principles, I believe, are perfectly irreproachable. Do you call upon me to affirm that every part of the conduct with which I have pursued these principles has been equally blameless? I will not assert any such thing. I am at this time a young man; and not free from the intemperance of passion, and the levity natural to the youthful character. I will not pretend that I have always been free from those imprudent passions which kindle into fiery indignation at the oppressions of the times. I will not say that every thing I have done in furtherance of these principles has been as well digested as, with my present experience, I could wish.

When our beloved associates—when those men of mind and virtue, whose names I will cherish with veneration, so long as “memory holds her seat”—when *Gerald, Margaret, Muir, Palmer* and *Skirving* were doomed to Botany Bay without having violated one law or principle of our constitution, it was natural, though it was not wise, for men who revered their talents and their virtues, to indulge the *British vice of intemperance*—for it is a British vice, and we are too apt to be proud of it.—It was natural that, under such circumstances, our blood should boil; and that we should say angry things, and pass vapouring, intemperate resolutions. But the minister knew that the “very head and jut of our offending went but to this—no further!”

What, then, is that administration which wishes to hang every man who makes use of an intemperate word against them?

But they have been disappointed; and what do they now attempt? They attempt to pass laws, which will make all those things treason which they endeavoured to make treason before without any law whatever.

The minister introduces two Bills. What are they? Bills that subject a man to all the penalties of High Treason who shall publish, or even *write, without publishing*, any dissertation which approves any form of government but the existing government of the country. Read Lord Grenville's bill—“to compass, imagine, invent, devise, or intend to deprive or depose

depose our sovereign Lord the King, his heirs or successors from the *style*, honour, or *kingly name* of the *imperial crown* [the language invented in the time of Charles the second] of this realm, or any part thereof, shall be guilty of High Treason." How is this to be proved? According to the simple and honest law of *Edward III.* the much more restricted treason was to be proved by some *open deed*. But how are these new-fangled treasons to be proved? Mark, I pray you,—"And if such person or persons, such compassings and imaginations, inventions, desires, or intentions shall *express, utter, or declare*, by any *printing, writing, preaching, or malicious and advised speaking*, then every such person or persons shall be adjudged guilty of High Treason." Well, then suppose I write a treatise in which I give a preference to republican government; and as it is not high treason yet, I will tell you that, if I were writing a speculative treatise, I certainly should give that preference!—

Being an Englishman, I uphold the constitution of *England*; not because Englishmen should prefer what is English (Virtue is as good if it comes from *France*, or the Antipodes, as if it were born in *England*) but because in *England* there is a constitution established, which, if realized by a fair representation of the people, is capable of securing the happiness of the nation: and having a decided abhorrence of tumult and violence, I reprobate the man who would plunge into commotion for speculative opinions. Therefore, though if I were an inhabitant of a country that had the *misfortune* to have a constitution to make, I would certainly give my vote for a pure representative republic; yet living in a country that has a constitution, which, though according to my speculative, if you please, *visionary* theory, not the best that could be devised, is good enough to secure the welfare of mankind, I say—realize that constitution and I am satisfied, and will uphold it. The welfare of mankind is my object, not particular modes or shapes of constitutions. But suppose I should write a speculative treatise (and why should general speculations be restrained) after this bill of Lord *Grenville's* is passed, it would not want a speech of nine hours to shew that such a book is high treason. *Hume* might have been hanged for his "Idea of a Free Commonweath," as *Godwin* has shewn in his "Considerations"—The future venders of that work may be hanged, drawn and quartered, as *Coleridge* has shewn in his "Protest."

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These bills, however, have for their principal object, the destruction of all those who, actuated by free and generous principles, endeavour to produce a reform in the representation. Well, then, Citizens, what are we to do? are we to abandon our principles? I say no: we are not to abandon our principles: and though I am not ready to plunge into tumult and violence—though I do not wish to see the sword unsheathed, yet I certainly do wish that every constitutional exertion should be made to get rid of those bills. I recommend therefore to all men, to exert themselves in every legal way to bring them into general discredit. I know they need but be fully and fairly investigated, and the general voice of the nation will be against them. I know, also, when there is a general consent of wills, no minister, and no band of monopolists, will dare to withstand the national voice: and that therefore, ultimately, though they should now pass, you will be eased of them, and of the ministers who dared to form them, and parliamentary reform will be the inevitable consequence.

This is my advice as to the general. As to the particular, I cannot be ignorant that these acts are made in a very considerable degree with a view to my destruction. I know also that the time will come when, in consequence of the persecutions I have endured, and the temper, permit me to say, with which I have faced those persecutions, I may be an instrument of some service to the liberties and happiness of my country. I shall not therefore give the minister an opportunity to destroy me upon any trifling contest. I have here maintained myself in decency, and cleared away the incumbrances which former persecutions had brought upon me. With something less than 100*l.* in my pocket I shall retire from this place, for the cultivation of my mind; and carrying the consciousness of my own integrity into retirement, maintain myself by the labours of my pen.

Having been so long seeking for my country, and having endured so much persecution in that search, I think I shall not be accused either of selfishness or pusillanimity, when I say, that I shall now wait till my country seeks for me; and that when my country does seek for me, she shall find me ready for my post, whatever may be the difficulty or the danger.

POSTSCRIPT. *Saturday, 26th March.* [The Reader will perceive by the conclusion of the preceding Lecture, what was the plan I had chalked out for myself: and he will be perfectly aware, from the circumstances that have since occurred, that my conduct has been the very reverse: that instead of retiring from the field I have been still exposing myself in the front ranks; nay, that deserted by friends, and assailed by enemies, I have been hardy enough to sustain the combat of political investigation *almost alone*. The truth is, that the bills were scarcely passed when one of those valuable friends whom correspondent zeal in the holy cause of human liberty has attached to me, suggested, that although, "*Lectures on the Laws, Constitution, Government, and Polity of these kingdoms*" were prohibited by the Convention Act, yet that as the bill was ultimately altered, no other species of lectures were put under any restriction, and that therefore I might still, with the utmost propriety, give a *Course of Lectures on Classical History*; and, in treating the grand subjects which such a course would embrace, might investigate all the principles of Government, all the vices of oppression, and all the mischiefs of tyranny and corruption, with *as much effect*, perhaps, certainly with *more freedom*, than under my original plan. I had no sooner cast my eye over the Act, with reference to this opinion, than I perceived it to be one of the clearest cases that could possibly be conceived. Lectures on the Laws, Constitution, &c. of *these kingdoms* are, it is true, prohibited, and the prohibition is accompanied with a penalty of 100*l.* for each Lecture, to be sued for by any common informer. But with respect to Lectures on any other subject, the law remains just as it did before this act was passed. This discovery immediately dissipated every idea of retirement.—To keep alive the spirit of political discussion, and above all, the discussion of principles, is the object most important to the cause of reform. There was something to be done: something of importance: something which I knew would not be done unless I did it: something also which would shew how vain it is to restrain the progress of intellect; how difficult to prevent determined minds from promoting the principles of truth and justice. I entered, therefore, with zeal into the project; I rejected offers of literary engagements, which were pressed upon me with the utmost solicitude, and the certain profits of which would have been greater than any I could expect, under all circumstances, from my course of Lectures; and, though my health was exceedingly shattered by recent exertions



exertions, prepared to renew those exertions in a manner (in point of necessary study and preparation at least) much more laborious than ever. In endeavouring to render this undertaking worthy success, I spared no application; nor, as far as my circumstances would permit, any expence. This last, is to persons not used to undertakings of this kind, perfectly incalculable. During my former Lectures, the enormous rent of my premises, (which is 13:4 a year; beside all taxes) the heavy burthen of advertisements, and the necessary precaution of a short-hand writer, had occasioned my expences, during the preceding course to amount to 330<sup>l</sup>. without including the books which from time to time it was necessary to procure. But for the course I was preparing, this last was an article so heavy as can scarcely enter into the imagination of that class of readers for whose benefit the cheap edition of the Tribune is printed and circulated. There is scarcely a book to be consulted upon this subject that does not cost two, three, or four guineas. I was not, however, to be intimidated by considerations of selfish prudence. I embarked my little stock in what I regarded as the public cause, and after a respite of six weeks, with a mind full of ardour, and with health imperfectly restored, I embarked again on the ocean of enquiry, steering a new course, but keeping still the same port in view. How I have succeeded in this undertaking, I shall shew more at large in an ensuing number; in the meanwhile I have fought a great battle!—I have obtained a proud victory. Mine indeed are the scars—but the fruit of the contest is my country's.

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup>. XLVII.

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A WARNING VOICE TO THE VIOLENT OF ALL PARTIES; *with Reflections on the Events of the FIRST DAY of the present SESSION of PARLIAMENT; and an Enquiry whether CONCILIATORY or COERCIVE MEASURES are best calculated to allay POPULAR FERMENTS.* Delivered Friday, Nov. 6, 1795.

CITIZENS,

THE war-hoop of faction once more resounds through this distracted country; and persecution is about to rage, perhaps, with more ferocity than ever. No sort of toleration it seems is to be allowed by persons of one class to those of another. Those, in particular, who are in power, and possess the offices of magistracy, seem to be infected with a baleful anxiety who shall be foremost in singling out the stigmatized reformer for destruction; and in exercising the new authority which they seem to think may be created by those *edicts of the cabinet, called royal proclamations.* With so little moderation is this power exercised—with so little discretion, that even the man who lifts his voice in behalf of moderation, and wishes to allay the furious passions of the times is singled out as an object of indignation; and even to talk of warning “the violent of all parties,” of the danger of their furious prejudices is regarded as a crime not to be endured. The poor bill-sticker who stuck the bills of this day, has been seized by the merciless hand of power, and thrown into prison.

Still, however, unmoved by resentment, uninfluenced by any sentiment but that love of mankind which inspires in the enlightened breast an ardent enthusiasm for liberty, once more I step forward to warn you with the voice of reason and candour to allay the furious tempests of passion which seem to threaten the total dissolution of all social virtue: and

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chiefly on you, my fellow Citizens, embarked in the great cause of liberty—on you I call with confidence: by you at least I expect, that the voice of warning will not be heard in vain. Let reason, I pray you, be your sole guide in that pursuit of parliamentary reform which I trust you will never abandon but with your lives. Believe me, Citizens, in all the situations in which man can be placed, in all circumstances of society, moderation, well understood, is the first of virtues. The exercise of this virtue dignifies the character of man, and lifts him from that brutal state to which ignorance and aristocratic fury would degrade him.

But, Citizens, however useful this moderation in all the circumstances of society, it is particularly necessary at a time when persecuting fury endeavours to deprive us at once of our rights and faculties, and to provoke us by every species of irritation and insult into excesses and tumults which might furnish pretences for the usurpations of a corrupt and vicious administration.

When I speak of moderation, however, understand, I pray you, the sense in which I use the word. Properly understood it describes one of the greatest virtues that adorn humanity; but it has frequently been abused to the most corrupt and vicious purposes. The hypocrite, or the coward, who dares not look any principle in the face, and pursue it through all its moral consequences, or a part of whose system of politics it is, to confound for party purposes, all distinctions between right and wrong, talks of moderation and abandons truth. This is not the sort of moderation I wish you to adopt: this is a moderation I abhor: I would rather be at once the prostituted pander of corruption, than the sneaking half-way *moderè* who bawls for liberty and yet shrinks from the manly investigation of rights and principles.

Principle, glorious principle, eternal, immutable principle, should be the standard around which the friends of liberty should always rally. Round this standard then let us rally in the present hour. Like the *Spartan* at his land-mark, to whom I have frequently alluded, let each man stand inflexible at his post; and though the fury of persecution should heap all the rubbish of perverted law upon him, till mountains of oppression lifted upon mountains bury him for ever,—a monument of persevering virtue.

Yes, Citizens, let us come to a determination rather to die

die than abandon the glorious privilege of liberty; but let us die like the *Spartan* I have alluded to, not like ruffians and banditti; let us shew what we are ready to endure in a good cause; not what we are anxious to inflict. It was said yesterday at the meeting in commemoration of Hardy's acquittal, by that veteran in the cause of liberty, *Horne Tooke*, that "we should resist oppression [and while we have life oppression shall be resisted] but it must be the resistance of the anvil to the hammer." It was as well replied by another Citizen, that perhaps the time might be near when something more than the resistance of the anvil to the hammer would be necessary. Citizens, that time is already arrived; and I will tell you what this further resistance is: it is not the resistance of violence and fury; but the resistance of an honest enthusiast, that, peaceably and boldly advances through every danger, and determines to reiterate, instead of relaxing its virtuous efforts for the emancipation of the human race. Let us not be merely stationary. Let us boldly advance to the heights of principle. Let us go forward in knowledge, truth, and justice; and I defy the utmost pride and insolence of persecuting power to prevent the ultimate attainment of our object.

But let us not think we are getting forward, if we plunge into headlong violence. Mark, I pray you, the state of the public mind: do we seem as near the attainment of our object now as we were before these unhappy excesses took place, which will form in a great part the investigation of this evening? In principle, then, not in violence I would have you get forward. In active exertion of mind, not in tumult, I would have you advance. Now is the time to cherish a glowing energy that may rouse into action every nerve and faculty of the mind, and fly from breast to breast like that electric principle which is perhaps the true soul of the physical universe, till the whole mass is quickened, illuminated and informed.

Think not, Citizens, that I address this invocation to one sect or party of men alone: I would have the same zeal glow in every breast, so it be attempered with the same moderation. Remember it is candour, it is the philosophical conviction at once of the dignity and of the fallibility of human intellect that should stimulate us to enquiry.

Our moderation ought not to be the consequence of a fear that dares not look principle in the face: it ought not to be



a consideration of danger to ourselves: it ought to be the fruit of candid research: it ought to spring from a deep-felt conviction that judgment is fallible; but, at the same time that there is no guide more infallible. The same moderation you expect from your opponents, therefore, that moderation you are expected to exercise towards them. Nay, I will go farther—moderation and candour ought to proceed from us especially. We are the party who pretend to be making discoveries in the regions of truth and political justice. We profess to have surmounted prejudices: shall we then, by our intemperance, shew that we still are prejudiced? We complain of the intolerance and persecuting spirit of the old system: shall we then shew that we are ourselves intolerant? We complain of wars, of bloodshed and of violence: shall we shew by our conduct that we also are violent and sanguinary? Do we wish to make profelytes to the principles we have adopted? Let us shew by the calmness and reasonableness of our deportment the confidence we have in the truth and justice of our cause. Mankind are prone to believe, and I suspect they are right, that where there is violence there is no heart-felt conviction of truth. Could we really shew this principle in all its naked loveliness, its irresistible charms must gain the affections of all. We have nothing, therefore, to do but patiently to strip off the cumbrous sophisms with which it has been disguised, and our work is done. But if we endeavour to tear them away with impassioned hands, we maim and disfigure our principle, and create disgust, instead of fixing attention, and conviction can never be expected. Of those who are now the antagonists of political truth; how many are only so because they have had no opportunity of candid examination? Let us allure them by our candour—Let us convince them by the unruffled mildness of our conduct, that our principles are not of that terrible nature which they have been represented. Let us convince them, by the striking contrast of our behaviour, who are the foes and who are the friends of order and humanity.

Citizens, it is easy to demonstrate that there needs no stronger argument that a man has not a perfect conviction of the truth and justice of his principles, than his being anxious to appeal to violence: for if we believe that our principles are true, and those of our opponents' false, what can we desire better than the peaceful opportunity of bringing prin-

principle against principle fairly into the field? Under such circumstances truth must bear away the palm of victory.—Have we any doubts upon this subject? Let us appeal to our own breasts. Who that hears me has not felt at different times different sentiments upon the same subject? Where is the man who calls himself a champion for the rights and liberties of man who cannot recollect a time when he did not see the question in the same forcible points of view? We must be children in intellect as well as limb before we can be men. It is only by exercising intellect in the one case, as our limbs in the other, that we can attain the upright dignity of manhood. I freely acknowledge that I recollect the time when my mind, swaddled in religious and aristocratic prejudices, struggled under the imbecillity of passion against those who differed from me upon dogmas which I had never examined; and indeed because I never had examined them. Shall I now then show the same blind fury against all who disagree with me? If I do, then instead of rising from error to truth and knowledge, I have only changed from ignorance to ignorance; and end the same blind bigot I began. Let me appeal to the judgement of others, if the history of their minds exhibit not similar changes.

Among the most enlightened friends of liberty I believe I could point out material changes of opinion. How was this change produced? By persecuting fury? Perhaps it was. Perhaps they were dragooned into the opinions they now hold; but it was by the persecuting fury of those with whom they formerly corresponded in sentiment, but who repelled them by their unjust and irrational conduct. Persecution does indeed make converts; but it is *from*, not *to*, the cause it endeavours to uphold.

If, then, you have changed your opinions, it is because the arguments in behalf of your former prejudices were feeble and yielded to the superior force of the arguments of liberty. It is therefore that you have abandoned old prejudices, and have become the advocates of what is called a new system: that is to say, the glorious system which says, one human being, not disqualified by crime, is as worthy in the eye of justice as another, and ought to be so in law; and that although property ought to be secured to him who by his industry and talents has obtained it, yet there is no reason why his property should give him the liberty of tyrannizing over and oppressing those who have been less fortunate.

Well,



Well, then, Citizens, let this warning voice ring in every ear; that *violence can but lead to destruction!* Let aristocrat and democrat be alike convinced that if he has truth on his side he need only bring forward that truth in plain and unsophisticated language, and he will be sure to make converts: but that, if he is supporting the cause of falsehood, force and coercion will be vain. They may awhile keep off the day of reform, but truth, virtue, and justice must ultimately be acknowledged. Let it be remembered, also, that if the demands of the reformer are just, to keep off the day of payment instead of mending the matter only makes it worse. It is adding all the consequences of litigation to the first demand; and woe to those who may thereby be thrown at last into the power of the irritated and defrauded creditor.

As for us, if we are not convinced that we have truth on our side let us abandon our pursuit; but if we are convinced, as I trust we are, let us make use of reason as long they will suffer us to reason. When they will not suffer us to reason it will be impossible for us to argue with our fellow citizens, and shew them the necessity of forbearing from violence; let what will ensue, therefore, the crime is with them who padlock the mind with unjust restrictions: but so long as we can use our reason, let us make the best use of it, by imprinting on every mind the necessity of investigation: and believe me, Citizens, if you have an anxious desire of knowledge you will find opportunities of improvement. The very coals burning in your grates will be eloquent in the exposition of oppressive corruption: every thing you eat, drink, or wear, will plead reform, and pronounce philippics against the burdens of taxation; and convince you how impossible it is for the great mass of mankind, under the present system, to obtain even common necessities to support that strength and that toil, by which, and by which alone, the necessities and enjoyments of life are created.

Read, Citizens, and think. If you read with attention, you will find matter enough for thought: and if you will not think, it is to no purpose that any man should exhaust his health and strength in inculcating the principles of truth and justice. I do not profess to make judgments for you—I do not pretend to create understandings—I do not pretend to implant even principles upon your minds—all that I can hope is to rouse and stimulate you to enquiry. And if you will but think, though the voice of all discussion were sealed up—though every book were destroyed, you will soon be convinced of the necessity of reform.

The glorious seeds of liberty are sown, and let oppression do its worst they will spring up in due season. *Charles I.* shut up the coffee-houses, lest sedition, as it is called, should be talked: that is to say, lest the frequenters of those houses should dare to say that he was surrounded by sycophants, hypocrites, plunderers, and oppressors, who pretended to make him a great prince, but used their authority to destroy the people. But did this, or the persecution that ensued under the reign of *Jam's II.* destroy the fruit of liberty? No. The elastic spring of British energy was not destroyed. The more it was compressed, the greater its reaction. The strong determination of awakened intellect drove the house of *Stuart* from the throne: and I hope every house that shall dare to tyrannise as the house of *Stuart* did will experience the same fate.

But who are the real authors of your oppressions? The ministers, and not the prince, are in reality guilty. Nay Pitt has told you that under *existing circumstances* he is virtual sovereign of Great Britain. I say, Citizens, that this has been declared almost in express words. Mark his speech. He talks in a royal stile from beginning to end; and assumes to himself the whole dignity and importance of regal power. Here is a ministerial paper professing to quote his own words, marked with inverted commas, to shew that it has been taken verbatim. "If *I find* (says Mr. PITT) "that all these facts, supported by the authority of the most intelligent Frenchmen, have contributed to *our* general welfare, and to the consequent improvement of *our* affairs, I cannot help expressing my astonishment, that any man should be bold enough to accuse *me* of insulting *my* country, when on that account *I declare MY satisfaction!*" ORACLE, October 30.

Now this is said in the debate on the speech from the throne. This is said in reply to the animadversions made by Mr. Fox on the passage in that speech which professes so much satisfaction at the *improved state of our affairs upon the continent*. This satisfaction, therefore, and this speech Mr. Pitt takes home, at once, in the first person. "It is *I* who speak," says he, "it is *I* who declare MY satisfaction. Majesty is but my representative organ—my mouth-piece. I am King *Stork*; and I cannot help expressing my astonishment that any frog among you should be bold enough to croak out his disapprobation of my royal word!"

If



If this is not the stile of usurpation, what is it? Do I go too far, when I accuse him of having assumed to himself the stile of royalty?

Citizens, I have professed to treat this evening particularly upon the events of the first day of the present session of parliament. There are two parts of these proceedings which might be dwelt upon, to illustrate the necessity of that candour I have endeavoured to inculcate. I have already said something upon what passed in the inside of the House of Commons. I shall dwell more particularly on what passed without those walls. Upon this subject, as upon all others, there are two statements, made by the opposite parties. The aristocrat affirms, that the tumults of Thursday originated in these lectures, and in the popular societies; and particularly in the meeting at Copenhagen House. The democrat, or reformer, affirms, on the contrary, that the tumults of Thursday arose from the bad conduct of the administration: from the present corrupt and profligate war, and that system of measures equally unconstitutional and unwise, which have plunged this country from misery to misery, into the abyss of ruin, till, at last, to close the great climax of human affliction, famine begins to stare us in the face; and our only way to remedy the scarcity of bread is to do without it. The aristocrat says, if you permit political discussion, treasonable lectures (as they are called) and seditious societies, where people enquire into their rights, and wrongs, the consequence will be tumult and disorder. The friend of liberty says—if you oppress the people they will be tumultuous; if you ruin trade, you will turn numbers of families out of employment, and overwhelm the people with distress; and, in consequence, poor beings who know nothing but their distresses—no principle but the stimulus of want, will commit depredations upon society.

Now let us fairly investigate these two statements. Remember, Citizens, that the aristocrats have yet brought forward no argument whatever, to shew the connexion between political investigation and these disturbances. Perhaps they think assertion and authority better than argument, especially when they come from a man who wears a great wig in Westminster hall or Lincoln's Inn. We have heard of a great number of persons being apprehended; and the magistrates, I conclude, would have been anxious enough to find it out, if it had been the case, and yet

yet it does not appear that any of them were members of the popular associations. What is the conclusion? Why that political associations have prevented the outrage, since those only have been outrageous who were no members of them; and that, therefore, if every man had been in the habits of political enquiry no outrage would have happened. Political enquiry and association shew a better way of redress. Tumult only gives fresh handle to the minister for adopting measures of worse oppression. It is true that a proclamation insinuates, and that a great and learned authority of the law absolutely asserts that there was a connection between the meeting at Copenhagen-house and the tumult which took place four days afterwards. The learned Lord, indeed, to whom I allude, makes a little mistake in order to support his statement; and says that the meeting was called the day before the meeting of Parliament: whereas the meeting took place on Monday, and it was not till Thursday that the tumult happened. Now, Citizens, what idea must we form of the inflammatory proceedings of a meeting that could keep the public mind without sleeping three whole days and nights till the opportunity should come to throw mud and stones against the gilt coach of majesty, and thus insult the sacred person and institution of royalty. Citizens, a part of these proceedings was a speech of an hour long on the necessity of using nothing but reason in the pursuit of reform, and a demonstration that every act of violence would only give the minister an opportunity to increase the chains and fetters of the people.

But what are the arguments by which the democrat and reformer support this side of the question. The arguments are of two kinds, the deductions of abstract reason, and the experience of all ages, from the first period of history to the present hour. These will shew, that the persons fondest of violence are those who are most ignorant. Violence always begins either with those oppressors who wish to destroy all knowledge but their own, or among those who, though they can feel the oppression, can neither write nor read—among poor, harrassed, and degraded beings who have neither opportunities nor inclination for enquiry.

When WAT TYLER, whose name has been so infamously slandered, and who, though an ignorant man (one of the swinish multitude!) had an honourable mind that

No. XLVII.

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disdained



disdained every subterfuge of art, and in the midst of triumph could trust his life in the hands of Kings, Lord Mayors, and Courtiers—who, to their honour be it remembered, assassinated him; because he did not chuse, when he had it in his power, to sacrifice them to an injured people! When *Wat Tyler*, and his insurgents, oppressed by the hardships brought upon them by mad and frantic crusades for the subjugation of France, spread terror to the very recesses of the court; were these insurgents men of enquiry? Were they men who had been in the habit of political association? Were they members of *Corresponding Societies*, or did they attend *Lectures in Beaufort Buildings*? No, neither lectures in Beaufort Buildings, nor London Corresponding Societies then existed. Political associations were unknown; and the men who committed the violence had never heard of meetings for the discussion of political principles. Stung with the wretchedness and misery of themselves and families, and not having the knowledge or ability to seek redress by argument, they appealed to the only logic which the politics and institutions of the times permitted to the mass, the logic of clubs and long-bows of which (for they had hands) they could not be deprived.

Let the whole history of the universe be searched—what does it shew?—that the more savage and ignorant people have been, the more they were disposed to tumult and violence. Who are the men at this time most inclined to tumult and violence? How are quarrels settled by the various descriptions of men? Men of enquiry sometimes get warm in controversy, it is true; but their heat evaporates in a few expressions of intemperate passion: while persons not used to enquiry vent their fury by knocking down their antagonists, and rushing into battle and destruction. As for reformers, the men accused of being the instigators of the recent tumult, it has been proved to have been their constant maxim—"Let us venerate the laws, and an honest jury will defend us, even tho' law should be perverted, and lawyers leagued in phalanx for our destruction." I say, Citizens, it has always been our maxim—although the laws should be ever so bad (and where is the country that has not bad laws?—and why should we be so bigoted as to hazard those that are good, rather than reform the bad ones)—venerate the peaceable execution of these laws; but do all you can to reform them. I say the same of constituted authorities. Venerate them as long as they act consistently with the authority vested in their hands. Attack not the magistracy, even if you should not like that magistracy;

magistracy; for what right have you to attack that authority of which the uplifted voice of the people has not demanded the alteration? If you by violence assault the magistrate in the execution of his office, assassination, and not reform, must be the order of the day; and tumult and desolation must prevent that happiness of mankind which is the anxious wish of every true lover of the principle of equality and justice. The constituted authorities, while discharging the duties of their respective offices, must be regarded as the representatives of the law, and their persons of course are sacred, although, in their individual capacity, they are no more than other men. The wild Indians, in this respect, set us an example worthy of imitation. Having chosen their chief to lead them to battle, they yield him implicit obedience in the camp: but when they return to their cabins and their families, they want no such magistrate, and he is treated only as a comrade. It is not the man who is sacred, it is, in reality the office. I do not mean that you have a right to assault the magistrate at any time; but I mean to say that the veneration you owe to the magistrate is attached to him only while he is discharging the duties of his office: at all other times you ought only to regard him as a man and an equal.

I believe these opinions will be implanted on every enquiring mind. I believe every man that argues will abhor violence; and particularly that violence committed against the constituted authorities. I believe reason and enquiry will discover better means of redress.

The tumult arose, not in consequence of reason and enquiry, but from the misery in which the people are plunged. How great and aggravated this misery has been is proved from documents not collected for any purposes of party; by documents collected even by persons of aristocratic principles. Remember I have proved to you that a man now gets but a fourth part of those necessaries of life, by a day's labour, which he got 3 or 400 years ago by less labour. Remember I have proved to you that a man bought as much corn, as much beer, as much meat, as much cloathing for one day's labour, when he got but 2d for that day's labour, as now, when he gets 14d. Nay, the disproportion is still greater; for this was calculated from the state of facts in the year 1787: the necessaries of life are since increased two-fold; and, in many instances, a man must now labour 6 or 8 days to procure those necessaries that formerly he could procure for one day's labour. The result is, that the great body of the people are slaves;



that they toil for arbitrary masters from morn to night; and almost from night to morn again; and get not even the common necessities of life; but are obliged to go, with suppliant voice, to beg for that to which they are entitled as the reward of useful labour. Thus men having no longer the means of getting even a scanty subsistence, fly into tumult. But are these members of political societies? Where should they find even the small pittance that should keep up those societies, or pay for admission to the lectures. Oh! that I could extend my voice to those poor individuals whose necessities preclude them from attendance. I have no doubt that, if I could have an opportunity of collecting these lower and despised orders of society around me, from all the nations of the earth, that I should be able to persuade them to lay all dispositions to violence aside.

I am convinced that the arguments I could bring forward would be irresistible to minds uncorrupted by the arrogance and selfishness, which debilitates and exhausts the understanding of the higher orders. I am convinced that I could bring the conviction of truth to their minds; and that the tyrants of the earth would no longer be able to get military slaves to commit fresh murders to promote their ambition.

Regarding even this slight, hasty and imperfect sketch of the arguments on our side, it is obvious that it is not in consequence of political association—not in consequence of the investigation of the principles of truth and justice—not from pursuing parliamentary reform, that tumults and violence have taken place; but that they are to be attributed to that misery which renders enquiry impossible, because it takes from man the means of purchasing the knowledge which could illuminate his understanding. This misery, while it checks information, diffuses irritation: and the minister, to allay this irritation, aggravates the cause. A wise physician would, perhaps, apply palliatives—not provocatives. But palliatives are not in favour with our state quacks. In their whole political pharmacopœia there is not a nostrum of this description.

The ministerial papers tell you that they foresaw the late disturbances;—that they saw inflammatory hand-bills about town, exciting to these excesses. If they did, why did not they send forth answers? Why did not they exhort the people to come peaceably and quietly, or to send their delegates peaceably and quietly to represent their grievances? that if they had wrongs justice might be done? But no—mark the  
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only use they made of the fore-knowledge; and then see which is most precious in the eyes of certain *supposed loyal persons*—the life of the monarch, or of the minister! A brave, honest and virtuous minister, aware that the indignation of the people were roused, would have asked his own heart, who roused that indignation? His own conscience must have convinced him that he was the man. If, therefore, there was any danger, and if he had any loyalty, he would have been the first to brave the tempest, that its fury having been spent his royal master might have passed in safety. But did he do so? Did the minister, whom the "*True Briton*," and all the ministerial papers tell you, knew of the tumult that was to happen—did he go first and expose himself as a brave man would have done, and have said, "Citizens—deluded Citizens—pr, if he liked it better, deluded swinish multitude—why are you tumultuous? If any crime of government has caused your miseries, the guilt lies on me, not on that royal master whom I serve, and whom it is my duty to protect."

This candour, generosity, honour, and fortitude, would have dictated; and that very honour, generosity and fortitude, would have disarmed resentment. But instead of this, he sends his royal master to the House, and stays behind himself, till he knows that the tumult is over; and then he sneaks to the House of Commons in a *hackney coach*! Is this the conduct of a man conscious of his own integrity? or is his zeal for royalty like his attachment to the constitution, which while he extols in verbose panegyrics, he is stabbing to the vitals—or his care for the protection of liberty and property, for the security of which he encourages *loyal associations* in every parish, while he himself is destroying the one to gratify his ambition, and plundering the other to carry on a mad and ruinous war?

Citizens, I shall dwell no longer upon this subject at present: but before I dismiss you, I shall say a few words on the crisis to which we are arrived. I feel the solemnity of the situation in which I stand. I feel the solemnity of the situation of my country. My heart grows too big for the breast that contains it. I feel it impossible even to restrain my voice or my feelings within that compass necessary for the preservation of my health—perhaps of my life. For the prolongation of my exertions, I wish I could command a moderation of feeling, as well as that candour and humanity I am endeavouring to inculcate. Fain would I discover the  
secret



secret, by which, without losing one atom of the energy, I might restrain and moderate the strong emotions of my heart, that I might imprint the same truths upon your understandings, without doing injury to my own frame. But if the two things cannot be united together—if this zeal and this energy cannot be exercised without this wreck of health and constitution, take what remains of this poor life; for I will not relax my exertions till uncontrollable force prevents their continuance.

The crisis approaches—the hour of trial comes, persecution and calumny usher it in; and however the storm may end, I must brave its fury. Rage and resentment I know are launched against me by the violent of both parties. While ministerial hirelings post me about the streets as a *miscreant*, and that scandalous and profligate paper called the “Times,” accuses me with hiring the mob that committed the tumults of Thursday, I am informed that the poor, infatuated, deluded people, at the east end of the town, who in the present hour of distress throng about the shops to buy for themselves the garbage and offal formerly consigned to dogs, and pay a pound for bullock’s liver, will turn sometimes indignantly away, and after first cursing the wicked administration that brought them into such miseries, will accuse me of preventing them, by my pacific doctrines, from redressing their grievances.

I know the danger of the situation in which I stand. I know that those whose designs are not honest, and those whose knowledge is not accurate upon the causes of our grievances, and the means of redress, will be indignant against the man who endeavours to arrest the up-lifted arm of violence, or calls on kindling vengeance to forbear.

For my part, however, my object is the peace, happiness, and welfare of society: I wish for the emancipation of the human race. I wish for equal rights, equal laws, and universal peace and fraternity, the branches and members of genuine liberty. In proportion, therefore, as the fury of the storm increases, as far as I am able, I will increase my efforts; and as I find in different parts of the town, the arm of authority is stretched forth to prevent political discussion, I will increase the frequency of discussion in this place as long as I have strength, and no absolute and determinate law forbids.

I shall, therefore, henceforward, continue my Lectures on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and may the spirit of  
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of enthusiasm that glows in my breast spread through every audience, and by them be diffused through wider circles, till liberty, equality, and justice become the wish of every heart, and the theme of every tongue.

\*\*\* I have said at the beginning of this Lecture that the Bill Sticker was taken into custody for sticking the Bill in which the subject was announced. That the reader may judge of the complexion and enormity of the offence, and the vigilance and wisdom of our magistrates, I subjoin a faithful copy, with all its aggravations of Capitals, Italics, and other rebellious distinctions of points, alphabets, &c.

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Taken in Short-Hand, by W. RAMSEY.

Such was the Bill poor Jobson was passing up in the neighbourhood of the Royal Exchange, when the great and sapient PAUL LE MESURIER, seeing with his own eyes the horrible treason, seized with his own band, the dreadful incendiary, and committed him to Wood-street Compter. The Mayoralty of Alderman Skinner was just at its close—the solemn procession of Lord Mayor's day, and the solemn business of the respective Halls, were preparing, and, as Mr. Alderman



*Alderman Curtis* was the *Mayor elect*, care was taken that the poor fellow should be forgotten till the loyal *Biscuit Baker* was in possession of the power. Upon such a bill, however, it would, perhaps, have surpassed the *confidence*, even of a *Contractor*, to have grounded any serious proceeding: but the poor fellow had unfortunately other bills about him, with which I had no connection; bills which contained an advertisement from the *Temple of Reason*, as it was called, announcing a Debate upon the propriety of resisting Convention Bills by insurrection and rebellion: and though they were evidently not half so angry with this foolish, vapouring, mad advertisement, as with the temperate language of mine, the magistrates made this a pretence for persecution. This accident of the same *bill sticker* being employed for the Temple of Reason, and my Lectures, formed also the foundation of one of those pieces of magisterial intrigue of which it has been my fortune to witness so many specimens: for although there was no more connection between the former and the latter than between the Pope and the Grand Turk, they confounded them perpetually together in all their proceedings; made use of every artifice to implicate me in the bill in which I had no concern, and at last, when every trick had been played off, both by means of the poor man and others, finding that I persevered in claiming the responsibility of my own bill, and avoiding all connection with the other, they dropped the prosecution, and withdrew their indictment.

My share of the responsibility, indeed, I took from the first in the most explicit manner; for on the morning of the first examination, I wrote a letter to the Lord Mayor, which was delivered in the presence of several witnesses, avowing so much of the transaction as I was concerned in, inclosing at the same time one of *my bills*, and claiming the right of being solely responsible for what I had caused to be done: upon which principle I desired that whatever prosecution might be called for by my bill, might be "directed against me, and not against a poor illiterate man who could never be expected to discover either Treason or Sedition in such a paper."—This letter I understand threw both the Mayor and *Monsieur Le Mefurier* into such an agony of indignation, that they could not avoid uttering some threats of what they would do if they had me in their power. Is it not strange, that men who ought to hold the balance of justice with a steady hand, should thus dash away the scales in a fury, and then mistake the violence of their own passions for violence in the Reformers whom they are so anxious *not to judge but to condemn*.

## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup> XLVIII.

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*The First Lecture on the POLITICAL PROSTITUTION of our PUBLIC THEATRES.  
Delivered Wednesday, April 1, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

I HAVE one admonition particularly to give you on this evening. It is upon a subject which I wish you would always have present in your minds, namely, that if any person should attempt any interruption, your best and most efficacious way of disappointing such malice will be to suppress your own indignation. I believe there are two or three persons present who have some design of creating disturbance: but leave them entirely to me; and I flatter myself I shall be able to frustrate their conspiracy.

Citizens, Few circumstances of my life have ever been more flattering to me than your extreme candor and indulgence on the last evening, when the state of my health rendered it impossible to exert myself as I wished. I cannot at present boast of complete restoration. If there should be less animation, therefore, less freedom of mind, than there ought, you will, I dare say, attribute it immediately to the right cause. The subject of my present discussion is the political prostitution of public theatres. This subject, Citizens, will strike you as being widely different from those which I have been generally in the habits of treating. Variety is indeed one of those allegorical mistresses to whom I profess a strong inclination to pay my court: and perhaps few of you will be sorry to have your attention relieved a while from the horrors and calamities of war, by the investigation of a subject which cannot but awaken in our minds ideas of taste, of literature, and genius. The subject however is a proper one, if properly treated, for a political lecture; for it is connected, in a considerable degree, with the morals, the manners and interests of society. Indeed, if we consider



seriously any subject whatever, though it may seem to the superficial observer as far removed from politics as the equator from the poles, we shall find, if it is a subject that has any meaning or connection whatever with any principle of common sense or morality, that it is in reality a question of politics. For though our rulers would persuade us that politics is a science with which the mass of the people have no sort of business or connection, yet it is in reality the root, the stem, if I may so express myself, of all morals, of all manners, of every thing that can affect the interest, the good conduct and happiness of society. Even our very amusements are intimately connected with the political system: and (to change my metaphor) if our grand political system is corrupt, that corruption will flow through every little meandering rivulet which should water even the pleasure-grounds of private recreation, or nourish the flowers that decorate the path of life.

I assure you, my Fellow-Citizens, my design in choosing the present subject has no connection with envy or malignity. Against persons connected with the theatres I have no animosity. I respect the profession; I respect the science. I am convinced that it is extremely important to the morals as well as the amusement of mankind. I have no desire but to rescue it from the tyrannical fangs of that corruption, vice, and prostitution, under which it has so unhappily fallen.

Among the particular reasons that have induced me to fix upon this subject, perhaps is to be regarded the circumstance that it is considerably connected with a most important part of the history of my short life. Those Citizens who marked with attention the proceedings at the Old Bailey, will remember that one of the articles of accusation against me, was a conspiracy to applaud and encore certain speeches in *Venice Preserved*. This circumstance may have had some share in drawing my attention to the consideration of the subject of dramatic exhibition; but farther than this, "I know no personal cause to prick me on."

But to turn to another reason, more important—the considerable effects of public amusements on the taste, feelings, and morals of society. History is replete with instances of the connection between the amusements and the morals of mankind, from the earliest periods to the present time. Cicero, in one of his epistles, gives a striking instance of this, in describing an exhibition at Rome in the time of Pompey.

Pompey. In this description you see the corruption and depravity of the country, which having been sown in the ambition and rapacity of the few, had been manured by the luxury, pomp, and extravagance, which prevailed in every part of their degenerate manners, and were now over-running that declining republic, like luxuriant and noxious weeds, and choking with their fatal growth every seed and shoot of simplicity, taste, and reason. While Rome retained her purity and energy, genius was invited to decorate her exhibitions with the passions of nature and the exploits of patriots. Virtue and public spirit were at once commemorated and inspired. But when corruption began to sap the vitals of that country, the theatre was changed into one monstrous puppet-show of splendid exhibitions, in which the mind had no share; and pageantries at which the heart of the reflecting man sickened. Instead of human beings stung with afflicting passions, or bravely suffering in the cause of virtue, animals of all sorts were brought upon the stage. Steeds capered, oxen bellowed, elephants were slain by the javelins of public combatants; and every thing but mind was exhibited for the amusement of the people.

Citizens, we might turn also to periods of English history, which equally illustrate the connection between public exhibitions and the morals of the people. Who can regard the state of the theatre in the time of Charles the Second, without reflecting on the share those exhibitions had in promoting and supporting that profligacy of manners which, like a deluge, spread over the country, and swept away every thing like public principles and private virtue? Then was every frequenter of the theatre doomed to hear sentiments replete with immortality, seasoned, it is true, with all the salt of wit and genius, but not therefore the less disgraceful to the character, or fatal to the morals of the nation. Tell me then whether public exhibitions are not fit subjects of serious investigation? Citizens, treating this subject historically, I must observe in the outset, that the theatrical amusements of the Roman world had a feature worthy of some part of your consideration, that is to say, they were presents made by wealthy men who were candidates for office, to the great body of the people. They were not in Rome, as in England, paid for by those who went to behold them, but were given, as we are told, by great men, who, wishing to trample on the deluded and misguided multitude, condescended to treat them one day, that they might plunder and oppress them another.



Plays accordingly were not performed every day in Rome, but for three or four days, and frequently for weeks together, at stated periods. On public festivals, at the times of the election of magistrates, and all such proper occasions, the great aristocrats presented the people of Rome with a sort of prototype of the corrupt and servile conduct which distinguishes the general elections of this country. Thus then in Rome the public theatre was made a vehicle of public prostitution, and an engine of ambition, by those who wished to raise themselves to eminence and afterwards to spurn that multitude whom, while it served their purpose, they pretended to flatter and caress. In England they have learned to do the same thing in a more frugal manner. This, you know, is an age of œconomy; we are blest with an œconomical minister, and an œconomical parliament; and every thing they do for the good of the people and *themselves*, they take care to do it at the cheapest rate. Thus at our public theatres the doors are not thrown open by the profusion of the great to invite the multitude and extort their gratitude; but by the prudent device of a monopoly, and the sapient intervention of a Lord Chamberlain, all the beneficial purposes of political prostitution are as effectually answered.

Two theatres only are admitted in this great town. It is true it is found necessary, every year, to enlarge those public edifices; but to suffer a third to grow up in any part of the town would be an invasion it is said of the sacred rights of property. Citizens, I repeat it, I mean nothing invidious to individuals. I speak of the system of monopoly, not of men; and monopoly in all its shapes I must reprobate and abhor. As for theatrical exhibitions in themselves, I venerate them more than all the mock realities, or real mockeries, of St. Stephen's Chapel. And as for the proprietor of one, at least, of the theatres, though I lament that his fine talents should be held in the trammels of party, I esteem the individual. I do not only admire his strong creative fancy, his brilliant wit, his erudition and his varied powers, but I revere also that patriot virtue which, in spite of faction, he has so often exerted with such intrepidity in behalf of liberty, truth, and justice. Nor shall I ever forget the man who in the very teeth of power bearded that high and *mighty* minister, who "bestrides this narrow world like a Colossus, while we sorry dwarfs creep under his huge legs, and peep about to find ourselves dishonourable graves;" I cannot forget the man whose erect attitude, firm countenance, and unfaltering

faltering voice, compelled the wretched minion of perverted power to refresh his memory, and recollect (with faltering and hesitation) those important circumstances which he was so anxious to forget. But while the system of corruption continues, while the system of monopoly, its necessary concomitant, prevails, the most brilliant talents will not always resist the infection, or see as they ought the force and beauty of those broad, moral principles of justice which the general tenor of their feelings would otherwise prompt them to uphold. Can it be conceived that any three or four men can have a right to purchase, or that any set of men can have a right to sell the exclusive privilege of amusing or instructing the public? Every man has a right—an imprescriptible right—for I am not afraid to uphold the doctrine of *the imprescriptible rights of man*) of pursuing his own advantage, and the benefit or amusement of his fellow citizens, by the exercise of such talents and faculties as nature, education, or accident, may some how or other have furnished. He therefore who has talents to produce a dramatic performance, and can persuade men to act it, according to my conception, has a right so to do, and the sanction of popular attendance ought to be the only licence to his theatre. The field of emulation ought to lay open for the display of those talents which he possesses; instead of their being nipped in the bud, by the cold, frosty breath of monopoly, before whose blighting influence every exertion drops into decay and annihilation. This monopoly is equally insulting to the town and oppressive to genius. It infects the morality and justice of the whole country. It has the power of confining any species of instruction and amusement within a narrow compass. It has the power also of dictating the particular sentiments to be uttered, the opinions that are to be propagated, and the factions, however despicable, to which all talents are to be prostituted. Thus we see dramatic energy, whether among writers or performers, dwindle away.

Look at the energetic compositions of those ages, when the theatre was free. Behold the flimsy insignificance of those compositions now brought forward to “fret their hour upon the stage, and then be heard no more.” Think of the strong energetic powers of mind displayed by the performers of former periods; the legends of whose wonder-working art still live, and make us sigh in vain for the talents that might produce the same vivid impressions. See now the drawling laboured readers, the mechanical measurers of lines and syllables, the limping halting rehearsers of murdered sentiments,

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the tedious hunters of quaint accents and new readings, duller than the village harbingers of Sternhold, who have no resource to extort a clap, or prevent the audience (*spectators* I should say) from sleeping but a few starts and fine attitudes directed to *the second gallery*. Is the human mind altered? Are not men the same now as they were fifty, sixty, an hundred or two hundred years ago? Is there any reason why theatrical exhibitions should formerly have produced such wonderful effects as stand on the records of history? and that now all should be so faint and languid? Is there any reason why the captive tragedians of *Athens*, by merely reciting the impassioned verses of *Sophocles*, should melt the hearts of all around them to compassion, and be crowned with the applauses of thitherto obdurate enemies, and restored to liberty? — while at present, the mad ravings of the tabernacle should be more impressive, more potent in stirring up the passions of the hearer than almost any thing we hear at our public theatres?

It is true we have seen some women performers of splendid talents. The inimitable vivacity of a *Jordan*, the strokes of native humour, or of pathos with which her representations abound, the sensations she imparts, the power with which she speaks, may be pleaded as an exception to the general censure. The expressive energy of a *Siddons*, her strong gusts of passion, and forcible appeals to the heart, may be also opposed to my arguments. Nor shall I deny the claims of a *Farren* to ease, to elegance, or even to a degree of merit, which if not actually entitled to the praise of fine acting, is certainly very little below the standard of excellence. But these are only exceptions to the general rule; and all is flat or frothy besides. What is the reason that we have fallen into insignificance, and that we should make such small approaches towards the excellence of former times? Citizens, the answer lies in that one word, monopoly. Monopoly is the answer also to be made to the question respecting the cause of the depravity, the false morality, the slavish maxims and sentiments daily and hourly, thrust down our throats at theatrical exhibitions.

Having taken this general survey of the degeneracy, and the cause of that degeneracy in the British drama, I shall proceed to investigate this subject historically; convinced, though the enquiry may not appear equally interesting with some other topics, that it is not without utility. I shall endeavour to trace the history of the ancient drama, and to show you by what means the governors of the ancient world made it  
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the vehicle of corruption and depravity. I shall afterwards, by comparing the history of the ancient and modern stage, endeavour to show the importance of reforming the system by which the Theatres are at this time so considerably shackled. Citizens, you must remember that, in the religion of the Greeks and Romans there were no preachers—no bodies of men set apart for the purpose of instructing (that is to say *deluding*) the people. There were priests it is true; and they had their functions; but these priests were not distinct sets of men, separated from the body of the people merely for politico-religious purposes. It was the business of these priests to superintend the solemnities and superstitions of the times—to appease the angry deities, for deities it seems could be angry, by offerings and sacrifices, and regaling their nostrils with the rich effluvia of a roasted lamb, or a broiled calf. They were also to repeat the oracles, which the divinity revealed; they were to sing forth their praises in hymns; they were to superintend the mysteries of their religion (for every religion when it becomes an establishment has its mysteries of course); they were also to consult those books of wisdom, the entrails of slaughtered oxen, to find when battles were to be fought, and when peace was to be made. O that the ox were but killed in this our country, whose oracular entrails might show us, by their augury, when peace is to be made!—But though they had great festivals—the ancients, by the way, were more fond of *festivals* than *fasts*: and to tell you the truth, I believe they were right. I think there is but one good reason for fasting, that is, it being a difficult thing to get any thing to eat.)—But though they had their festivals, their ceremonies, their sacrifices, their oracles, their hymns, their augurs, their mysteries, yet they had no national professional teachers of unintelligible dogmas—no black-gowned retailers of the dictums of the minister, to lay the consciences and energies of the people prostrate at the footstool of power. They had no set of men hired to subscribe thirty-nine articles which they did not understand, and afterwards to stand up in a sort of tub, with their chins over a velvet cushion, like Jack in a box, to preach doctrines diametrically opposite to the articles they had subscribed. These were refinements in policy of which they had no idea. It was however necessary in some way to supply this deficiency: for instruction is necessary for mankind, as ministers, when it suits their purpose, know very well; and as we I trust shall always remember: for I do not mean  
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by any thing I have said to disapprove any mode or shape of instruction, whatever be the particular sentiment or opinion promulgated. I do not wish to deprive any person of the right of hearing or teaching what he thinks right. Enquiry is not only the right, but the duty of man. I only blame those institutions which, under colour of assisting enquiry, have for their fundamental object the suppression of all enquiry. Which pretend to instruct, but only endeavour to teach us how to be more ignorant than ever.

But, citizens, although the nations of the ancient world had no seventh day in the week set apart for the purpose of hearing a man whose opinions no one was to call in question, by any token of contradiction, or disapprobation, yet they had their philosophers, their schools, their instructive institutions, from which their enlightened and powerful minds diffused the ray of genius and science around. They had their *Gymnasia*—their schools for all sorts of exercises, whether of mind or body; where their youth were trained to strength, to activity, to wisdom and to virtue. These, as our accounts run, were first instituted at *Lacedemon*, and contributed, in no small degree, to create, and for many hundred years to preserve the energy of the *Spartan* character. They were afterwards adopted and improved, by the rival states of *Greece*, particularly *Athens*, and finally by victorious *Rome*.

*Athens* seems to have improved very considerably upon the plan. Mind and body were both attended to by each of these magnificent, though diminutive states: but *Sparta* appears to have been most solicitous about the body, *Athens* most attentive to the mind. *Athens*, in short, appears to have been a portraiture in miniature of what Republican *France* promises to be upon the gigantic scale. She had her schools and academies of all descriptions; and her public tutors of every kind, from the dancing-master and lute-player to the professors of the most abstruse branches of science and philosophy. Hence the energy and variety of *Athenian* talent—hence those gay sallies of fancy and those daring flights of imagination—that sublimity which awed, and that levity which amused the world.

Among the principal of these *Athenian* gymnasia were, 1. the *LYCEUM*, or school of *ARISTOTLE*, the founder of the *Peripatetic* philosophy, so called from this philosopher, delivering his lessons to his pupils while they were walking about, that health and intellect might be promoted together. While perambulating with him beneath the spacious porch,  
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his scholars were thus taught to soar into the regions of science and enquiry, and by the bold exertions of intellect to enlighten their hearts, improve their faculties, and extend their power and inclination of serving their fellow men. 2. The ACADEMUS, or Groves of PLATO, the founder of the *Academist* sect; and 3. the CYNOSARGES, where ANTISTHENES founded the philosophy of the *Cynics*: a word at present generally applied as a term of aversion and reproach; as *Christian* once was, and *Jacobin* now is: but stigmatizing a name does not prove that all who bear it are therefore justly odious, even although some of them may have behaved in a manner disgraceful to themselves. *Cynics*, *Christians*, and *Jacobins* have each in their turn, conferred considerable benefits upon mankind; although the first have sometimes degenerated into sour misanthropes, the second into juggling tools of tyranny and superstition, and the third into anarchists and assassins.

These different sects of philosophers all delivered their instruction in that way, which, by interesting the imagination, leaves the most durable impression on the memory. In short, they were all, not dull droning schoolmasters, but animated *Lecturers*. Oral instruction diffused its animating influence throughout the circle of auditors; and social sympathy went hand in hand with instruction.

Mark the fruits this oral instruction produced! See at one period assembled together, within the narrow boundaries of a little city—little in comparison even with some of the provincial cities of France, but whose name still strikes us with majestic ideas, and fills our hearts with veneration! See assembled in this little city, a larger number of men of talents, and understanding than ever existed together in the largest kingdom or monarchy of the whole habitable globe.

“ ————Immortal Sages!

“ Ye noblest benefactors of mankind!

“ Unworthy as I am to lift my soul

“ To thoughts of your beatitude, or hope,

“ In this degenerate superstitious age,

“ To emulate your glories, and revive

“ Those awful traits of unassuming wisdom;

“ Those precepts, whose simplicity of thought

“ Evinc'd the true sublime! O! let me, yet,

“ Indulge my raptur'd fancy for a while

“ With your high converse; and the fond idea

No. XLVIII.

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" Sate with the glorious vision, as I roam  
 " Forgetful of the world, its systems vain,  
 " And all the crude conceits of bigot Folly,  
 " Whose rage embroils and thins the human race !  
 " And thou, majestic Athens ! thou blest nurse  
 " Of Arts and Knowledge, Liberty and Taste !  
 " Under whose *free invigorating* laws  
 " The giant-soul of heav'n-enlighten'd man  
 " (Untramp'd by tyrant badges of distinction,  
 " Which virtue own'd not, nor which merit claim'd)  
 " Swell'd, tow'ring swell'd, to due proportion'd strength,  
 " And left the *pigmy slaves of future courts*  
 " With base despair to wonder at its greatness,  
 " And mourn their fall, degenerate !"

## PERIPATETIC.

The instruction of these philosophers, it must be acknowledged, was confined within a narrow circle. We cannot give to the ancients the praise of that wide and generous diffusion of knowledge which some nations have aspired to of late. There seems to have been a select and chosen few only who were to be initiated into the philosophy and science of the respective schools. The *Swinish Multitude* were to be kept without the pale of knowledge; for fear, I suppose, that they should scrub themselves too hard against the forbidden tree of knowledge, and, shaking down the fruit, should eat thereof, know right from wrong, and good from evil; and become as wise as their masters. Their schools however, contracted as they were, certainly extended a considerable degree of science, taste, and virtue, through the *Athenian Republic*. The annals of that country, and a variety of anecdotes on record, are sufficient to shew us that the mass of the people were not in a state of total ignorance; that they in some degree understood, and jealously guarded the rights of man.

The rulers therefore began to suspect that some engine of a more powerful nature than dogmas of obscure philosophy, and pageants of a sensual religion, was necessary to operate upon the public mind. The engine they wanted was found in dramatic exhibition. This species of exhibition was invented in the first instance by the priests; plays being exhibited on their great festivals, as a part of their religious ceremonies. At first, we are told, a single speaker, smeared

fineared with the lees of wine, and a chorus, or band of fingers, composed the whole of the *dramatis personæ*; and we may be assured that the performances in other respects would be equally coarse and imperfect. But in time we find the powerful minds of Eschylus, of Sophocles, and Euripides, exhibiting all the energies of genius and sentiment in those charming scenes which have contributed to the delight and instruction of ages. Statesmen soon saw the importance of this engine. During the earlier times of the Athenian Republic, the use that was made of it was generous and noble; at least according to the generally received notions of the world. They inculcated, through the medium of these performances, a veneration for their native land and compassion for the distressed, and excited the auditors to virtue, by impressing the general moral of distributive justice. Their vanity, and their policy also, led them equally to inculcate an attachment and veneration for the laws and customs of their particular country; but their favorite theme was the virtues and heroic deeds of their forefathers, which were held up to their admiration with all the aids of fiction and poetic embellishment. I do not mean to be understood as applauding the system of those sanguinary philosophers (if such terms can be reconciled together) who make virtue to consist in war and slaughter; still less do I approve the prejudices inculcated in those theatrical exhibitions, for the purpose of disposing the people to blind attachment and submission.

But if these were the purposes to which the theatre was applied, during the purer periods of the Athenian Republic, let us see what was the conduct of it when a corrupt *Aristocracy* raised itself on the ruins of the democratic constitution. No sooner had the *thirty Tyrants*, assisted by the *Spartans*, laid prostrate the liberties of the people, than they erected a system of the most cruel despotism. Persecution, corruption, and inquisition became the order of the day; as they always must wherever Aristocracy or Oligarchy usurps an unjust dominion. Then was every power and energy of genius prostituted to the vile purposes of the ruling faction. Then did the theatre become indeed corrupt. The drama, which was designed for the instruction of mankind, was made an engine to slander virtue and destroy the best advocates for the happiness and rights of the people. The most memorable of the victims to this perversion of the drama was the great, the truly glorious Socrates: a man whose wisdom



and whose virtues will receive the admiration of mankind, so long as virtue and wisdom are capable of inspiring those sentiments,

Citizens, You will presently see that it was not at all astonishing that Socrates was selected as a victim to the tyrannical oppression of these oligarchic usurpers, who, while they pretended to support and venerate the laws, and called upon the people for that veneration with threats of punishment and death, trampled themselves upon every principle of law and justice, and rioted in the ruins of that government and constitution which they pretended to uphold.—Such has been the conduct of tyrants and usurpers in all ages. Law and constitution, peace and order, are incessantly upon their lips; but their hearts are full of corruption and oppression, cruelty, arbitrary violence, sanguinary ferocity, plunder, and the worst anarchy of capricious domination.

Citizens, The character of these men, known by the name of the thirty tyrants, thus usurping the authority of the senate and people of Athens, is drawn in a masterly and brief manner by one of the writers of the life of Socrates; and the picture is, at this time in particular, worthy of some attention. "These cruel monsters," says he, "under the pretext of punishing rebellion and treasonable offences," (you see it is not only in this country that the charges of treason have been considered as the most efficacious engines for the destruction of those patriots who dare to reprobate the conduct of men in power)—"Under the pretext of punishing treasonable offences, they robbed the most upright men in the republic of their property and their lives. To plunder and proscribe, the latter of which they did openly, the former more like assassins and murderers, were deeds which characterized their government." MENDELSSOHN's *Life of Socrates*, p. xxxv. By which plundering like murderers and assassins I suppose we are to understand the sly and apparently legalized plunder of unnecessary taxation; of aids and contributions, frittered into innumerable divisions, and levied under innumerable false pretences, till the people paid perhaps, though imperceptibly, at the rate of sixteen or seventeen shillings in the pound. These, according to my author, were the deeds that characterized a government of "Tyrants," or "Monsters," than whom "the most cruel enemy could not have committed more barbarous outrages," Ibid.

Citizens,

Citizens, You will not be surprized that such a government—a government composed of characters like these—a government of insolent aristocrats, who had usurped to themselves the power of the senate, and domineered over the country, without either consent of the people or real constitutional authority—a banditti armed with pretended rights and exclusive privileges—you will not be surprized that such a government should be desirous of destroying, at any rate, such a man as Socrates, when you learn what sort of man Socrates was.

These rulers were perhaps of illustrious families—perhaps they had *divine* ancestors—they had perhaps long titles, and bead rolls of hereditary honor; and rank and family were with them, perhaps, synonymous, or perhaps paramount to virtue and justice. Or perhaps they might some of them be upstart adventurers, lifted at first on the shoulders of popularity, till they were high enough to grasp the golden reward of apostacy, and with the tragedy of oppression conclude the mock spectacle which began with the farce of patriotism. Think with yourselves how detestable to these men Socrates must have been, who was, in plain *English*, or rather in plain French, nothing more nor nothing less than an *upright, downright SANS CULOTTES*. Yes, I say, Citizens, that Socrates was a *Sans Culottes*; and for aught I know he was in reality the founder of that most worthy and excellent sect of philosophers. But, Citizens, I do not mean by *Sans Culottes* such beings as have been created by the distempered imagination of that Melpomene in breeches, Edmund Burke. He indeed, in the famous dagger scene, exhibited at our grand Theatre Nationale, made a most frantic and pathetic speech, harrowing up alike the feelings of auditors and brother comedians, to convince us that daggers were principles, and the prince of darkness the only true *sans culottes*. Neither was Socrates such a *sans culottes* as filled the imagination of that great metaphysician Windham; nor such a *sans culottes* as was painted upon a certain occasion by the great, the grave, the consistent, the patriotic Serjeant Adair. He was not a *sans culottes* according to the definitions of those whose imaginations can dwell upon nothing but scenes of massacre, desolation, and anarchy. He was a true *sans culottes*. He was an advocate for the rights, happiness, and liberties of mankind—an upholder of the genuine principles of liberty and equality. He was also a *sans culottes* by birth: and those great personages could not  
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but look with disdain upon the person, and with rancorous envy upon his popularity, whose father was a stonemason, and whose mother a midwife; who spent the first thirty years of his life with the mallet in one hand and the chissel in the other, and was remembered by many of them in his leathern apron. It is impossible to suppose these great men should endure that such vulgar, low-lived, swinish beings as these, should have the same or superior talents, more virtues and popularity, than their own high mightinesses. The rulers, who were for monopolizing to themselves every honor and advantage, could not but be expected to think that "men who had a parcel of people running after them were best in a place of security:" and what place so secure as the grave?

But, Citizens, this philosophic, this intelligent worker with the mallet and chissel, had not only to answer for the crimes of low birth, wisdom, virtue, and patriotism. He had vices of a deeper die, and more terrific magnitude. He was an enthusiastic lover of truth—a promoter of wisdom—a diffuser of light and virtue among the great body of the people. The light of his knowledge was not hid under the bushel of learned mysticism. It shone abroad upon all mankind. He seemed to think that the lowest members of society had a right to know the difference between virtue and vice, between justice and oppression, between tyranny and good government. We cannot be surprized that a sans culottes of this description should be detested by aristocrats of the description before specified. He promulgated truth to the people at large. He brought, as has been said, philosophy from the clouds to dwell in the habitations of men. He dragged science from the cobweb cells of the pedant, and carried it to the manufactory—into the workshop of the artificer, and the resorts of the labourer. He diffused the light of science and virtue among all mankind; because he was convinced that all mankind were his brethren, and that they could not lose the claim of brotherhood by poverty or wretchedness; that nothing could rob them of that brotherhood but crimes, and that all withholding of the rights of that brotherhood was oppression.

Citizens, he "began," we are told, "to oppose sophistry and superstition with success, and to teach his fellow citizens wisdom and virtue. In the open streets, in the public walks, and baths, in private houses, in the work-shops of artists, or wherever he found men whom he thought he  
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"could make better, he entered into conversation with them, explained what was right and what was wrong, what was good and what was evil, &c." MENDELSSOHN, p. xii.

He was not afraid to contradict every forgery and imposition. "He adhered to the maxim—That every false tenet or opinion which led openly to immorality, and was consequently contrary to the happiness of the human race, ought to be reprobated, and its pernicious consequences exposed to public ridicule, in presence of the sophists, the priests, and the common people." *ibid.* p. xv. Here were church and state, of course, upon his back at once. Priestcraft and the 30 tyrants must have gone to wreck ding dong, if such *sedition* as this had been tolerated: and great generals, and army agents could have been no better off. For if he laid open to the multitude whatever was contrary to the happiness of the human race, in what colours must he have painted the usurping oligarchy! How must he have exposed the juggles of hypocritical priests! How must he have described the pernicious consequences of the system of war! In short, what bitter things must he not have said of that government, which trampled upon the liberties of Athens! Nor could the lawyers, or, as they were then called, the sophists, have been more in his favour. "For the corruption and venality of the times, and, in particular, the mean avarice of the sophists, who sold their poisonous instructions for ready money, and employed the most shameful arts to enrich themselves, at the expence of the deluded people, were circumstances which compelled him to oppose the prevailing passion for gold, by the utmost disinterestedness of conduct himself." MENDEL. p. xiii. In short, "The happiness of the human race was his sole study. As soon as any opinion or superstition occasioned an open violence, the invasion of the NATURAL RIGHTS OF MEN, or the corruption of their morals, no threats or persecution could prevent him from declaiming against it." MEND. p. xxxii. With doctrines like these we cannot be surprised that he rendered himself odious to men whose crimes I have already described, and whose eminent situations made them jealous of all popularity. They could not but be convinced that if he proceeded with these *seditionous doctrines*, he would drag them and their vices to public view, and make the people too wise to submit to their abominable dominion.

Such was the inflexibility of the man, that he dared to oppose, you find, whatever could be regarded as an invasion of the *natural Rights of Man*. Here is sans culotism with  
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a vengeance; and in every part of his doctrines, as handed down to us by his disciples (for he has left us nothing of his own upon record) these principles are to be found. No length of prescription, no pretended fundamental maxim of religion or state, no threats of power or prosecution could deter him. He was a champion of the Rights of Man, and opposed even the most venerable institutions and opinions, when humanity and justice were violated by them.

Now you will, I am sure, be convinced that such seditious dispositions, such treasonable purposes as these, could never be countenanced by such a regular, consistent, orderly government as the oligarchy of Athens. We find accordingly, that they were determined to try him for *high treason*. Sedition was not enough. They knew that the existing laws as they stood were not sufficient for his destruction, or in other words, the people's minds were not prepared to put just such constructions upon the existing laws as their Attorney-General might think fit to maintain.

And now to shew you how this long digression, as it appears, is connected with the subject. Determined upon the destruction of this great good man, the faction in power made use of the prostitution of the Theatre as an engine to effect those detestable purposes, as I shall presently shew you, by traducing his character by base and slanderous misrepresentations; while *Critias*, his former friend and pupil, whom he had offended by telling him boldly of his vices, together with *Charicles*, were appointed to find grounds of accusation against him. In other words, they appointed a *select and secret committee*, to make a *special report* upon their new-fangled law, or perversion of law, by the assistance of which, together with the inflammation of the public mind, they might be able to prove that truth was sedition, and argument high treason. They were a secret committee, it is true, of only two. But two bears as tolerable a proportion to thirty, as twenty-eight to five or six hundred. Nay, perhaps certain committees, in other countries, might be essentially as select as this—committees in reality of two or three, to whom all the rest were mere puppets; these the only actors, the bell-wethers of the flock, who whenever they tinkled their little cannister were certain that the rest would cry *baa*, and follow.

Citizens, these accusers, we are told, could not *find* a law to answer their purpose, and therefore they *made one*. And what do you think the law was? It was not a proclamation—no—it was a law made in a regular, solemn way. It was,

was, "that no person should teach rhetoric." In other words, they prohibited Soerates from giving any more lectures. "They found that Soerates transgressed against them "in words:"—that is to say, he spoke bold truths—he cultivated reason: and how should tyrants endure truth and reason? Then it was that words became high treason in Athens. But let us see the complexion of his offence. "Soerates "transgressed against them in words, and had let it be vari-  
"ously reported, it was wonderful if shepherds made the  
"herd which was entrusted to their care, grow small and  
"more meagre, and yet should not be accounted bad shep-  
"herds; but it was still more wonderful, if the guardians of  
"a state made its subjects grow fewer and worse, that they  
"should not be accounted bad guardians." MEND. p. xxxvi. Wonderful treason, indeed! Thus if the tyrants had plunged the country into an unnecessary and mad crusade, depopulated the country of one third of its inhabitants, and reduced it to beggary and want, according to their law, and construction of law, this would be no crime in them, but it would be a crime in any man who should lay down any axiom or principle of reason by which their wicked conduct might be condemned. Thus were laws made, not for the benefit of the people, but to preserve the governors from being responsible to any principle of reason or justice.

In consequence of this, the *sans culottes* SOCRATES was called before the *aristocrats* CRITIAS and CHARICLES. "They summoned him before them, shewed him the law, "and forbid him to enter into conversation with young peo-  
"ple." *ibid.* Soerates, it seems, wished to obey them if he could; but he thought it necessary to understand them. "Is  
"it permitted," said he, "to ask questions? For this prohibi-  
"tory law is not sufficiently clear to me."—"Yes," they  
"answered. *ibid.* p. xxxvii. But it was afterwards added, that  
it was totally forbidden that he should discourse with the young. "That I may know also how I am to conduct  
"myself in this particular, said Soerates, inform me *how*  
"long men are to be accounted young?—As long as they are  
"not entitled to a seat in the Senate, answered Charicles;  
"that is, until they arrive at maturity of understanding, to  
"wit, at thirty years.—If I should purchase any thing, returned  
"Soerates, which a young man under thirty years has to sell,  
"may I not ask him how dear it is?—That is not forbid thee,  
"said Charicles; but you ask many things which you know:  
"from such questions in future refrain.—And answers? con-



“tinued Socrates. If a young man asks me where Critias  
 “or Charicles dwells, may I not answer him?—Yes, cer-  
 “tainly, said Critias; but mingle not in your discourse old  
 “thread-bare maxims and allusions to *belt-makers, carpenters,*  
 “and *smiths.*” (They neglected, it seems, to give him any  
 warning about button-makers and hog-butchers!)—“Pro-  
 “bably, replied Socrates, I must also avoid communicating  
 “the ideas of *justice, holiness, piety, &c.* which I have been  
 “used to illustrate by those examples, &c.—*Perfectly right,*  
 “answered Critias; and above all things,” take care you  
 don’t talk about *Game Cocks.*—O no, no—I mistake—it was  
 not *Game Cocks.* Game Cocks they had no objection to,  
 nor Bantums either—but “above all things speak not of  
 “*Shepherds.* Mark that well, or I fear you will also make  
 “the herd smaller.” MEND. p. xxxviii. &c.

“Socrates,” we are told, “regarded their threats as little  
 “as their *absurd law, which they had no right to pass con-*  
 “*trary to reason and the law of nature.* He continued his  
 “efforts in support of virtue and justice with the most un-  
 “wearied zeal. The tyrants never dared, notwithstanding,  
 “to make a direct attack upon him. They therefore at-  
 “tempted by ways.” MEND. p. xxxix. They endeavored  
 to implicate him in their own crimes; but in vain. The  
 fans culottes Socrates was no Burke, no Windham, to put off  
 his patriotism as he changed his cloak, to shift from one  
 side of the house to the other as suited his convenience, and  
 take his bitterest enemies to his bosom for the sake of a place  
 or a pension. Every art was therefore practised to inflame  
 the public mind against him, to misrepresent his character,  
 and impeach his morals. Among the rest, we are told, that  
 “the priests, sophists, and others equally venal in their pro-  
 “fession, who must have felt Socrates a thorn in their side,  
 “hired the comic writer Aristophanes, to expose him to  
 “public ridicule and hatred.” Accordingly, in his comedy,  
 or farce of *the Clouds*, that buffoon represented the light of  
 science, the illuminator of the world, in the most ridiculous  
 point of view, and thus slandered him to his fellow-citizens,  
 in order that he might fall a more easy prey to the arts and  
 machinations of those enemies who wished his destruction,  
 because he was virtuous, wise, generous, and brave. For  
 when these qualities meet together in the character of a  
 public instructor or reformer, the consequences of the illu-  
 mination he disseminates among the people must be the shak-  
 ing

ing to their very foundations the corruption and tyranny he opposes.

Thus, Citizens, we find even in the early periods of history that the theatres have been not only considered as powerful engines to improve and instruct the people, but that they were also made use of as powerful engines to bring virtue into discredit, and to mislead and delude mankind; and thus to support that tyranny and oppression which nothing but delusion can perpetuate in any country.

Unfortunately Socrates was not tried by a jury of his equals. Athens, enlightened as it was, had many imperfections in its institutions, which modern experience can readily descry. The system of representation, upon which this country first blundered, and which America first realized, was unknown in Athens; as was also that glorious institution *Trial by Jury*: and Socrates fell. The first great advocate for the *Rights of Man*—for that general diffusion of knowledge, the principles of which are now likely to be disseminated among all mankind—fell beneath the tyrant arm of that oppression which he was so anxious, by peaceable, by rational, by virtuous means, to reform. The example of his sacrifice—the sacrifice of virtue and wisdom on the altar of pretended treason, has since, it is true, been repeated in many a despotic country, and many a country boasting the forms, but wanting the pure spirit, of a free constitution. He is however one of the most illustrious examples that stand upon record, of a man sacrificed by the arm of what is called law for endeavoring to enlarge the boundaries of human science, and bring happiness to the great body of the people.

Such were the purposes to which the Grecian theatre was sometimes perverted, when it fell under the dominion of corruption. I shall not now endeavor to trace its history in another country, nor bring to mind the degrading picture which the enquiry would exhibit.

The Roman theatre (like the Grecian) while the pure principles of liberty could charm—while republicanism, and its concomitant virtues and energies prevailed;—(it is no crime, I hope, to commend the virtues of a republic)—while those principles remained uncorrupt, the theatre flourished; but it fell into degradation when tyranny began to exercise its horrors, and *glorious Republicanism* was changed for the *gaudy crimes and debility of Empire*. When Caligula, gluttoned



glutted with blood, and bathed in licentiousness, wished that all Rome had but one neck, that he might smite off every head at a blow: and when Nero, at once a tyrant, a fidler, and a buffoon, extorted the approbation of his subjects by files of pikemen and prætorian banditti, the theatre became a scene of disgusting depravity. Nay, even in the times of Pompey, when a corrupt oligarchy was paving the way for the horrors of the succeeding tyranny, the theatres had lost their manly and rational character; had degenerated into pageantry and buffoonery, and exhibited nothing but what debauched and effeminized the gaping spectator. I will not pretend that in this country such scenes of licentiousness and vice are exhibited, as sometimes disgraced the public theatres of old: but I am authorized in saying, that every exertion is used to make our theatres a vehicle of political corruption, not less insolent and scandalous than it is contemptible and degrading.

It is impossible for me at this time of night to enter into this part of the investigation; I must therefore refer it to another opportunity.

But, Citizens, I pray you, keep in your minds the virtues and the fate of Socrates. Remember the deep contrition, anguish, and remorse of the Athenians, when reason returned, and the recollection that they had spilt the blood of the friend of all mankind haunted their imaginations. Remember also the parallels that are to be found in the ages of corruption in this country. Remember that while the Muse of Dryden was prostituted to misrepresent the facts of history, and propagate from the stage every delusion, and every sentiment that was base, sanguinary, and slavish—while in tragedies, comedies, prologues, and epilogues, he offered the incense of genius at the shrine of tyranny, and branded with infamy every thing that breathed the spirit of virtue and liberty—remember that during the infatuation inspired by these and similar artifices, Sidney fell the victim of his virtue—the scaffold was stained with the blood of Russell; and patriot after patriot felt the keen axe of sanguinary Tyranny. The repentant tears of Britain, it is true, as of Athens, blotted out the attainders of those virtuous men from the records in which they had been enrolled: but no tears could recal from their tombs those virtuous patriots, who lived for freedom, and for freedom died.



## THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup>. XLIX.

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*The Second Lecture on the POLITICAL PROSTITUTION of our PUBLIC THEATRES,  
Delivered Wednesday, April 15, 1795.*

CITIZENS,

**T**HE early history of the British Drama is not so well marked as the early history of the Drama of Greece. The fact is, that the extreme barbarity in which Europe was plunged for many centuries, first by the ravages of the Goths and Vandals, and afterwards by the ravages of *monks* and *priests*, has prevented us from having any very accurate account of the transactions of those dark periods.

We find, that about the eighth century Charlemagne introduced into France the custom of holding fairs, during particular festivals, where the rude inhabitants of the respective towns and villages were enabled to provide themselves with such articles as they had not the means of procuring at ordinary times in their own districts and neighborhoods. These fairs were also introduced into Britain, by *William the Conqueror*, in the eleventh century: Great concourses of people being assembled always at these fairs, the venders, in order to attract attention, and dispose of their commodities, employed the mummeries of a parcel of minstrels, mountebanks and buffoons, who with their coarse jokes and antic dialogues amused the customers at the respective booths. From these rude beginnings sprung our dramatic entertainments. For the minstrels and merry-andrews, from being thus employed to attract the attention of the people, began, in progress of time, to form themselves into a sort of independent profession; and those who had some little rude capacity for recitation, began to exhibit a sort of farces, for the entertainment of our gross and ignorant ancestors.

If the nature of this course of lectures permitted me to enter copiously into the subject, it would perhaps afford

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some



some entertainment to give you a few sketches of the gross and ridiculous entertainments which our ancestors enjoyed with such avidity, and of which great ladies of the court are said to have been spectators, without even the shelter of a fan to hide their blushes. It is not my intent however to enter into details of this kind. Suffice it to say, that those rude exhibitions soon becoming apparently a source of considerable profit, the priests, always special advocates for monopoly, began to be a little jealous of these buffoons, whose mummeries they found were so much more pleasing to the people than their own. They could not see, without holy indignation, the profane multitude, instead of offering their money to religious uses, squander it away in amusements in which the priests had no share. They endeavored therefore to stop this channel, that the money might flow into that place where all good things ought to concentrate, the bosom of the church. The first instrument they made use of for this purpose was a bull. I do not use the word in the Irish signification: though certainly their bull proved in the end an arrant blunder. But the bull I mean is a native of Rome, a papal bull. Denunciations of eternal wrath and vengeance were poured upon the heads of the mountebanks and players. Excommunication was pronounced in full congregation upon all who were profane enough to exhibit these rude dramas or mummeries to the populace. But in defiance of the roaring of bulls, the thunders of the vatican, and the diligent persecution of the priests, the minstrels continued their dramatic entertainments, and the people to throng to the exhibitions. The priests therefore thought of a better way of managing the business; and knowing right well that though theatrical entertainments were very wicked things when performed by laymen, they would, nevertheless, be most excellent and virtuous if performed by their sacred order, the monks and clergy determined that they would be players themselves. They accordingly converted the churches into public theatres; and soon found that the exhibitions and mummeries performed there on their festivals and working days, were more profitable than the mummeries, equally absurd and ridiculous, which they performed on what they called the Lord's day. Thus the churches then became the scenes of these rude amusements; and as the monks and priests possessed a degree of knowledge superior to the other orders of people, the mountebanks and minstrels were not only rivalled, but soon eclipsed; and the monks and clerks, as of divine right they undoubtedly

undoubtedly ought, monopolized those profits and advantages which had been before so profanely diverted into another channel.

Their first exhibitions were chiefly *mysteries*, from the sacred writings. From thence they proceeded to *moralities*, as they were called; in which however they so contrived the business, that mystery or morality should be equally profitable to themselves, and subservient to the great cause of extending ecclesiastical tyranny.

Citizens, Such was the state of the drama while the Roman Catholic superstition reigned without controul. The reformers however were not a little scandalized at this abuse of the places of public worship; and this was one of the articles of accusation against the clergy of the established superstition. In process of time, as the reformation gained ground, this abuse (if abuse it is to be called) was removed. The churches were purified from the profane spectacles of the drama, and the trade of theatrical performance was separated from the trade of the priesthood. Separations of this kind you know are not uncommon. At some periods of history, the priest, the physician, and the conjurer were generally united in one and the same person. So in this country once, as in some countries to this day, the barber and the surgeon were one and indivisible.

It is to be observed, that the Puritans, after they had triumphed, in a considerable degree, over the Romish clergy, continued to cherish the abhorrence for theatrical exhibitions, which perhaps their temporary connection with the Romish superstition had inspired. And indeed it is but very lately that this prejudice of severe reformers has in any degree worn away. Even since the middle of the present century, Mr. Home, the author of "Douglas," was excommunicated by the Presbyterian synod for having been the author of that tragedy; replete as it is with the purest sentiments of morality.

One of the true reasons, however, of this aversion, is to be traced, I believe, to a political source. The reformers were almost universally friends of liberty (as far at least as they understood the subject;) and as public exhibitions were made use of as vehicles of fulsome adulation to tyranny and oppression, we are not to be very much surprized if, while enquiry was yet young, and people, of course, not very nice in their discriminations, blame should be attached to the whole science of the drama (and so be traditionally handed down,)



down) which belonged only to the particular prostitution of the drama,

Certain it is, that the conduct of dramatic writers, for a considerable time, was not calculated to remove those aversions; and during the reigns of Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First, the theatres still continued to be powerful vehicles for the suppression of every generous principle of liberty. I am sorry in this general censure to be compelled to include the names of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. It is lamentable to perceive how these men of powerful and expanded minds, of great and extensive capacities, and original genius, were shackled by the customs and trammels of the times. Whenever they speak the language of politicians, with reference, in any measure, to the country in which they lived, all is servility and adulation. Shakespeare, whose energetic mind pervaded not only the whole sphere of animated existence, but soared into the regions of fancy, and presented his auditors with a creation of his own—Shakespeare, whose powerful genius sounds all the depths of moral character, and lays bare all the emotions of the heart—Shakespeare, whose "Othello" has shaken the soul perhaps of every one who hears me, whose "Lear" has claimed the mingled tears of horror and pity, and whose "Macbeth," at the same time that it harrowed up every feeling, has impressed the moral convictions which ameliorate at once the heart and the understanding—even Shakespeare himself too often wielded the pen of political prostitution; and, not satisfied with burning clouds of incense to the virgin purity of that prototype of the present "Empress of both the Russias," misrepresented even the facts of history, and exhibited in the most odious colors men who deserve the admiration of the world.

Can we forget, in his "Julius Cesar," the character of Cassius, whom historians have considered as "the last of all the Romans,"—the last of those in whose bosom the genuine principles of Roman virtue glowed? This brave patriot, Shakespeare has painted as a compound of rapacity and envy; thus holding him up to hatred and contempt:—For what? Because with patriot hand he probed the heart of a tyrant, of whom there appeared no other way of ridding society. In his "Coriolanus" we must also lament the same species of depravity. Who can behold without indignation the contemptible light in which he has exhibited those  
virtuous

virtuous tribunes to whom Rome owed so large a portion of her liberty?

When he paints the aristocratic pride of Coriolanus, it is true he gives the full coloring to that insolent tyranny of spirit which has characterized the aristocracy of all countries in the world—*England* only excepted! But though he could not be blind to this, yet he could shut his eyes to the virtues of the democracy, and represent in colors the most contemptible and degrading, both the people, and the tribunes who stood forward so boldly for the rights of their fellow citizens.

In Jonson, it must be admitted, we have frequent flashes of political truth; especially when his genius was warmed by Roman story, and his heart uncorrupted by views of patronage and court favor. I shall give a few specimens of that energy with which he felt the principles of liberty. In his "*Sejanus*," a tragedy which I would have every individual in this country read with the utmost attention, because it exposes in the strongest and most energetic manner the infernal system of spies and informers, for the revival of which in Britain we are so much obliged to the *Sejanus* and *Rufinus* of the present day—In this tragedy, where he paints the daring ambition of the worst of men, the most deceitful and treacherous of ministers, wading through the blood of thousands to the attainment of uncontrollable authority—where he paints also the contemptible arts of the slaves and panders of power, and the glowing energies of virtue which dare defy this power, and treat those arts and machinations with contempt, he has given us, among others, the following specimen of just sentiment and good reasoning, upon the apologies we so often make for neglecting to do our duty, on account of the times in which we live.

*Sabinus*. "But these our times are not the same, *Arruntius*."

*Arr*. "Times? The men,

"The men are not the same: 'tis we are base,

"Poor, and degenerate from th' exalted strain

"Of our great fathers. Where is now the soul

"Of god-like *Cato*? He that durst be good

"When *Cæsar* durst be evil; and had power,

"As not to live his slave, to die his master.

"Or where's the constant *Brutus*, that (being proof

"Against all charm of benefits) did strike

"So brave a blow into the monster's heart

"That



" That fought unkindly to captive his country ?  
 " O, they have fled the light ! Those mighty spirits  
 " Lie rak'd up with their ashes in their urns,  
 " And not a spark of their eternal fire  
 " Glows in a present bosom. All's but blaze,  
 " Flashes, and smoke, wherewith we labor so.  
 " There's nothing Roman in us ; nothing good,  
 " Gallant, or great : 'tis true that *Cordus* says,  
 " *Brave CASSIUS was the last of all that race.*"

In the same page we have also a very fine picture of the cautious manner in which systems of tyrannical cruelty are generally introduced, with a prophetic sketch of what is likely to be the consequence when ministers have once dipped their hands in the blood of patriotism. They may mean, perhaps, to stop with the first stroke ; but blow follows blow by inevitable and growing necessity, massacre after massacre, and execution after execution, till he who meant, at first, only to cut off the few individuals who stood in the way of his aggrandisement, falls, at last, into every thing that was base and vile in the character of a *Robespierre*.

————— " The way to put  
 " A prince in blood, is to present the shapes  
 " Of dangers greater than they are (like late  
 " Or early shadows) and sometimes to fain  
 " Where there are none, only to make him fear ;  
 " *His fear will make him cruel : and once enter'd,*  
 " *He doth not easily learn to stop or spare*  
 " *Where he may doubt.*"

I shall present you with only one extract more from this author, as it will shew you that he could not only paint the progress of villainy, but could delineate the energies of virtue also.

" Your state," [says *Sillius* to *Agrippina*]  
 " Is waited on by envies as by eyes ;  
 " And ev'ry second guest your tables take  
 " Is a fee'd spy, t' observe who goes, who comes,  
 " What conference you have, with whom, where, when ;  
 " What the discourse is, what the looks, the thoughts,  
 " Of every person, there they do extract,  
 " And make into a substance.

*Agr.*

*Agr.* "Hear me, Sillius:

"Were all Tiberius' body stuck with eyes,  
 "And ev'ry wall and hanging in my house  
 "Transparent as this lawn I wear, or ayre—  
 "Yea, had Sejanus both his ears as long  
 "As to my inmost closet, I would hate  
 "To whisper any thought, or change an act,  
 "To be made Juno's rival. Virtue's forces  
 "Shew ever noblest in conspicuous courses."

Yet this poet, who could delineate so justly the horrors of tyranny and the energies of virtue, even he was compelled, or thought himself compelled, to prostitute his Muse for the basest purpose, to exalt to heaven the female tyrant, who stretched her iron sceptre over the beggared nation, and to propagate doctrines the most detestable. I shall give you one specimen of this from "*Cynthia's Revels*." You will please to remark that he represents Queen Elizabeth under the character of *Diana*, or *Cynthia*—this being one of the characters under which she was very fond of being complimented: And from masks and mummeries, where she was exhibited with the joint attributes of *Venus* and *Diana*, she went into the Senate (to show perhaps which of these goddesses she most affected) to give her royal assent to acts of Parliament, making it High Treason to call any individual heir apparent to the throne, but such as were of the *natural issue of her body*. So that the royal *Diana*, you see, expected to have *natural* children, though her goddessship chose to keep herself out of the way of having any legitimate heirs. Nature, however, was not kind to her wishes, and the blood of the Tudors became extinct. But mark how Jonson makes this *Diana* express herself in this play.

*Cyn.* "When hath *Diana*, like an envious wretch  
 "That glitters only to his soothed self,  
 "Denying to the world the precious use  
 "Of hoarded wealth, withheld her friendly aid?  
 "Monthly we spend our still repaired shine,  
 "And not forbid our virgin-waxen torch  
 "To burn and blaze, while nutriment doth last;  
 "That once consum'd, out of Jove's treasury  
 "Anew we take, and stick it in our sphere  
 "To give the mutinous kind of wanting men  
 "Their look'd-for light. Yet what is their desert?"

*Bounty*



"Bounty is wrong'd, interpreted as dull.  
 "Mortals can challenge not a ray by right,  
 "Yet do expect the whole of Cynthia's light.  
 "But if that deities withdrew their gifts  
 "For human follies, what could men deserve  
 "But death and darkness? It behoves the high  
 "For their own sakes to do things worthily."

So that you see by the very convenient expedient of representing queens and kings under the symbols of divine personages, and thus teaching the swinish multitude that they are of an inferior class and species, dependent only upon their creating power and goodness, the opportunity is taken to teach the people, that whatever advantages they possess are only so many kindnesses bestowed by these great potentates: that they are, in reality, entitled to nothing; but that their sovereigns are entitled to every thing. Just so the confessor of Louis the Fourteenth consoled the tender conscience of that *good man*, who being troubled at the idea of slaughtering so many thousands of his subjects, and stripping the poor peasants of every means of subsistence, applied to the physician of his soul for comfort, and was very comfortably answered, that "every thing his subjects had was but the gift of his Most Christian Majesty's bounty, and that therefore every thing he left to them, be it ever so small, was in reality an act of benevolence, and instead of its being necessary for him to be troubled in conscience for what he took away, they ought to love and honor him, and bow down with gratitude to him for not having taken all the rest."

Citizens, I have already animadverted upon the disgust and indignation which the severe part of the reformers entertained against theatrical exhibitions. We are not to be surprised, that in the great convulsion that ensued this hatred was still more aggravated. We are not to be surprised that men who were in quest of liberty, should treat with hatred and detestation a species of amusement so long used for the purpose of propagating doctrines the most tyrannical and diabolical. Accordingly one of the consequences of the triumph of the republican party over *Charles I.* was a suppression of theatrical exhibitions. This, however, was one of the delusions which characterized an age in which the principles of liberty were very much talked of, and as much sought for, but very little understood. Therefore it was that the country only vibrated from one system of tyranny to another;

ther; but never found the true balance of Liberty. It had not intelligence enough, science enough, liberality enough, and, therefore, not virtue enough, to secure the liberty it fought for; and therefore after being wearied with innumerable changes from party to party, the great mass of the people became disgusted with revolutions from which they received no benefit, and submitted to the unfortunate restoration: for unfortunate I must consider the restoration of the house of Stuart, to a throne stained by their tyranny and forfeited by their crimes.

At this fatal restoration, a flood of licentiousness poured in upon the people. That severity which had been carried to so absurd an extent by the Puritans, was followed by a profligacy equally (but only *equally*) vicious and disgusting. The Theatres upon their restoration, we may be sure, would partake of all the licentiousness, and all the principles, of the new despotism at which the Court was aiming. The dramatists and players entered with peculiar zeal into the views of government; and not only the comic talent of Sir Robert Howard in "the Committee, or the faithful Irishman," (which still preserves a place in our theatres) but even the pathetic genius of Otway, and the energetic powers of Dryden were exerted to bring liberty into discredit, and to extol those principles which ought to be abhorrent to the hearts of Britons.

It is true, that it was not only the drama, but every branch of literature that was infected with this disposition to bow down to the golden calf of authority. Spenser, whose genius deserved better employment than writing panegyrics upon Queen Elizabeth, and flattering, with servile complacency, all the minions of a court, was another instance of this prostitution of talents; nor is there a branch of literature that does not present us with too many examples. Perhaps some excuse may be found for the writers of those times. Knowledge was not widely enough diffused among the people to enable genius to look with confidence to public patronage, and therefore they were, in some degree, compelled to be dependent upon the great, and, of course, to repay the scanty favors they received with a large and usurious interest of unmerited praise and literary servility.— Happily, at present, we do not labor under the same necessity. The man who has generous virtue, and intrepid courage enough to despise that contemptible thing called pa-



tronage, to propagate the real sentiments of his heart, and seek for no remuneration but that which the public (perhaps upon the mere principle of seeking its own gratification) bestows, may now, if he really has genius, be enabled to eat the bread of independence, without obligations to those little beings who call themselves the great.

Authors were making rapid strides towards the discovery of this truth, men of letters began to employ their talents in a more liberal way; they wrote for the people, and to the people, not to a few great men; they began to find their interest in their public duty, instead of seeking their duty in their private interest. In short, they began to speak out bold truths, and disseminate political information. This was soon perceived by ministers; and that great and virtuous supporter of all regular and orderly government, Sir Robert Walpole, who first made the important discovery in political science, that "every man has his price"—that great man found that though Houses of Lords might be filled with new created peers, to support the influence of the minister, though votes in the House of Commons might be bought by private contract—(it is only of late that they have been sold by public auction—in Walpole's time, no auctioneer put delicate contingencies in his catalogue, and sold the representation of the people, like lots of indigo, by the candle) this great statesman found that though he could make new Houses of Peers, and buy and sell seats in the House of Commons, and the men who sat upon those seats, yet he could not buy away the impression made upon the minds of the people by those vile Jacobinical fellows who wrote lampoons, tragedies, comedies, and farces, cherished and diffused the principles of liberty, and exposed the encroachment of corruption. Therefore (though he did not venture to go the length of an imprimatur on the press) he devised that most excellent and most virtuous act, of which neither Whigs nor Tories have of late thought fit to attempt the repeal, by which every play, before it can be performed at either theatre, and every sentiment, before it is permitted to be spoken, must be corrected by the critical acumen of the Lord Chamberlain. It was also found that it would favor the virtuous views of government to contract the number of public theatres; that managers would be more easily trained to strict acquiescence in their designs if they gave them, by way of bonus, a snug monopoly. Thus all play-houses were to be shut that had not the royal licence and authority.

Now,

Now, Citizens, mark the consequence of this monopoly. Genius has been suppressed, as of course it must be: for to encourage genius you must throw open the door of emulation, and let men of genius reap the profits of their labors. Two playhouses only, in a large town like this!—playhouses that may be extended to any given magnitude, and yet more must not be added to the number. What absurdity! But the pretence is to prevent licentiousness. It is not licentious then to have two theatres that might contain half the town at once, but it would be licentious to have five or six smaller theatres. But in considering all acts of parliament there are two things that must be kept distinct: The pretence in the preamble, and the operation of the clauses. If licentiousness is not prevented by these restrictions, something else is. It is easy for combinations of particular ranks of people to discountenance and cry down any particular class of sentiments, which but for this monopoly would be impossible; it prevents the Lord Chamberlain from having so much business on his hands as might occasion him to perform *his task of criticism* in a slovenly manner; and it enables faction to prevent any obnoxious man, whatever his genius and capacity, from reaping any advantage from his labors in this way. Hence, then, the views of the minister are answered, and the dramatic muses are subjected to political prostitution. Hence the paucity of dramatic genius. Hence also the proprietors themselves are held in chains; and, in short, the player is a slave, the proprietor is a slave, the writer is a slave, and every individual who expects to reap any emolument from the cultivation of his powers and faculties in the dramatic line, must bow down to the principles of the predominant faction. You must bring forward, say the higher circles, whatever dull, insipid nonsense, suits our political purpose, and exclude every liberal, patriotic sentiment, or your huge theatre, which nothing but an enormous receipt can support, shall exhibit “a beggarly account of empty boxes.” But if the theatres were more numerous, and not so large, they could never be rendered dependent upon any class or combination. Thus the effect of this monopoly, as with all monopoly must be the case, is the diffusion of one general principle of prostitution and dependence.

Reflect, Citizens, to what an audacious extent the oppression in this respect has been carried. Not a very great



while ago, one of the first performers at the Bristol theatre was suspected of *jacobinism*; that is to say, he was reported to have censured very freely, in conversation, the mad and desperate projects of the present minister. What was the consequence? The nobility and gentry in the neighborhood combined together, and wrote a mandate to the managers to dismiss him from the theatre; a command with which the manager was obliged to comply.

Citizens, we have had instances in this town equally disgraceful to the independence which was once a national characteristic of Britons. Among a variety of just and moral sentiments which were obliged to be struck out, for political reasons, from a comedy lately exhibited at Covent Garden, there is one I cannot forbear specifying. The heroine of the piece is the daughter of a poor painter, but is attached to a man of rank. A lady of quality, remonstrating upon the subject, says to her, "have you considered the distinction which places you at such a distance?"—"I have considered," replied the simple fair one, "and can find no distinctions but between vice and virtue." This was a sentence not to be endured, and every thing of the kind was expunged before it was permitted to be performed; and after all, it being reported that the author was a man who professed patriotic sentiments, a conspiracy to damn it was formed at the Percy Coffee-house (the same house in which the conspiracy was formed against Citizen Frost;) and though they could not effect this, such an opposition was made to it as to prevail with the managers after a few nights to lay it aside. I will not dwell upon the innumerable instances that might be brought forward to illustrate this subject; but will just turn your attention to a curious piece of fustian that lately stalked across the stage, with lame and decrepid gait, under the name of "England Preserved." It ought to have been called "England Pickled;" for never was historical subject served up in a worse pickle than in the instance I am speaking of. This play was pushed upon the stage, we are told, with a weight of patronage at its back. It could not be refused by any means whatever. Why? Because it scandalized every virtuous character that had distinguished himself three or four hundred years ago in behalf of liberty;—because Pembroke, who was a zealous champion for freedom, as far as it was then understood, is represented there as the mere supporter of absolute tyranny

tyranny and prerogative;—because those brave barons who at the edge of the sword purchased and defended *Magna Charta*, which we call the bulwark of our liberty, are stigmatized as a base band of traitors, and every calumniating epithet is heaped upon their heads. And yet, what was the true character of those men? They were guilty of an error I admit; but they displayed an energy highly honorable to themselves, and useful to the people. They called in, it is true, the *Dauphin of France* to assist them; and they found their error in so doing: for fatal is the delusion of that people which looks for liberty from foreign interference. If a people are not capable of obtaining their own liberties, they are not capable of enjoying them when they have got them. If they have not energy enough, and intelligence enough to redress their own grievances, and reform their own abuses, it is vain to expect any thing from foreign aid. Great excuses, however, are to be pleaded in behalf of the barons: they had entered into treaties after treaties with that weak and detestable monster *Jahn* (for there have been kings in *England* both weak and detestable;) and the tyrant had repeatedly bound himself by the most solemn engagements, which he as regularly broke on the first opportunity. And be it remembered, that when the tyrants of those days were disposed to break their compacts with the people, they generally found some snug way of introducing foreign mercenaries into the country. Perhaps they were taken sick in the neighborhood of our coast, and were landed for the benefit of land air and fresh vegetables; and there being no *Corresponding Societies* at that time, by the publication of energetic resolutions to prevent the effusion of human blood, and drive them home again, they were marched into the heart of the country, to guard the royal person, and domineer over those jacobinical friends of liberty who dared to quote *Magna Charta*, and insist upon the benefit of its provisions.

Thus, in this country of old, it was sometimes the case, as lately with respect to the Dutch, that appealing to foreign assistance was only calling in one foreign army to drive out another foreign army: and every nation, having no other means of emancipation, has a right, in such cases, to appeal to such measures. If the tyrants of that period surrounded themselves with foreign troops to enforce their tyranny; if they domineered by the arms of mercenaries, who having

no



no common tie of affection, no common interest with the people, but were merely paid to cut their throats whenever they were bid, the people were not to yield their throats like sheep to military assassins. If there was no other protection, they were obliged to appeal (melancholy as the appeal must be) to that resource to which the Barons in the time of John did appeal. In such case, it is not the appeal of treason to foreign invasion; but the appeal of necessity, repelling foreign force by foreign force, and choosing, between two evils, that which appeared the least.

In the instance in question, however, the choice was very unfortunate. They unfortunately called in, not a people, but a Dauphin, an heir to the *French throne*, to restore them to *British liberty*. The consequence of which, if their ally had succeeded, must have been, to have rendered this country dependant upon the court of France.

Citizens, of late we have heard a great deal about Republicans keeping no faith. It would not, therefore, be amiss to compare the different situation in which England was placed by calling in the Dauphin, and that, in which Holland has been placed by accepting the aid of the French Republicans. How humane, mild, and benevolent has been the conduct of emancipated France in Holland! How treacherous, how vile was the meditated conduct of the French prince and priests in England. Hence you may draw some inference which it is better to trust (if trust you must) republicans or princes. Nothing, however, but an appeal to foreign force on the part of an usurping government, can justify an appeal to foreign force on the part of the people: and such an appeal is always a dreadful calamity. The legitimate means of redress are the energy and resolution of a brave people, wielding the powerful weapons of reason, truth, and justice. These, where these can be used, are the proper instruments of temperate and gradual reform, leading from time to time, as national intellect expands, to a state of political amelioration and felicity.

But although history has been so abused and misrepresented for purposes but too obvious, yet it is confidently reported that the Lord Chamberlain has been reprimanded for not exercising his censorship with sufficient circumspection, and letting thereby the following lines, which, somehow or other, had crept out of place, into this performance, to pass unblotted—

“ This sword already laid one tyrant low,  
Nor has forgot its duty for another.”

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It is hoped, however, that a little salutary reprehension will occasion that august critic to take care that, for the future, no such jacobinical sentiments shall find their way to the stage.

The perversion of historical facts in the drama is no new device. We find similar instances in the writings of Dryden, who has represented the cruel and wicked assassination of the Duke of Guise as a meritorious action. We find it also in the works of Otway; and particularly in the tragedy of "Venice Preserved," from which I mean to read you a few passages this night, and for applauding which I was to have been hanged as a traitor. In the original story from which Venice Preserved is taken, Renault, whom Otway has represented as the most gloomy and ferocious assassin, is, on the contrary, a character of transcendent virtue; and the conspirators altogether are a very different set of men, with very different views, from those which the play delineates. Otway disfigured this story to pay his court to Charles the Second, with a view, as it appears, of bringing the patriots of those times into detestation, by representing all reformers as conspirators, and all conspirators as ruffians: and thus was this piece now so dreaded by the court, written to serve the purposes of the court, and was thought, if I may so express myself, an antidote, not a provocative, to the *jacobinism* of those times.

There are, however, in this play, sentiments that breathe all the ardor of political virtue. So difficult is it for men of genius to dwell upon such subjects without feeling themselves occasionally overpowered by the convictions of truth and justice. These sentiments, it is true, are too frequently mixed and confounded with others of a sanguinary and detestable nature; and the character that utters them is represented as associated with beings that excite no emotions but those of disgust and indignation. But the sentiments in themselves are not therefore the less true and excellent; and truth ought to be marked with approbation wherever it is met with. It was under this impression that, together with four or five persons, whom the witness for the crown magnified into forty or fifty, I went into the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, where we joined with a great part of the house in applauding these passages. You know the alarm which succeeded. It is no secret that persons in power interfered, and that after two representations this piece was laid upon  
the



the shelf; and the share I had in promoting the applause made a conspicuous figure in the late charge of High Treason. But I trust, Citizens, that you will not have so great an aversion to these lines. I shall therefore repeat them; and indeed I think myself called upon so to do; and to declare at the same time that my admiration for the sentiments they contain is not abated.

- “ Pierre. *'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted;  
 “ I steal from no man; would not cut a throat  
 “ To gain admission to a great man's purse,  
 “ Or a whore's bed: I'd not betray my friend  
 “ To get his place or fortune; I scorn to flatter  
 “ A blown-up fool above, to crush the wretch beneath me.  
 “ Yet, Jaffier, for all this I am a villain.*
- “ Jaff. *A villain!*
- “ Pierre. *Yes: a most notorious villain,  
 “ To see the sufferings of my fellow creatures,  
 “ And own myself a man: to see our senators  
 “ Cheat the deluded people with a shew  
 “ Of liberty, which yet they ne'er must taste of.  
 “ They say, by them our hands are free from fetters,  
 “ Yet whom they please they lay in basest bonds;  
 “ Bring whom they please to infamy and sorrow;  
 “ Drive us like wrecks down the rough tide of power,  
 “ Whilst no hold is to save us from destruction.  
 “ All that bear this are villains, and I one,  
 “ Not to rouse up at the great call of nature,  
 “ And check the growth of these domestic spoilers,  
 “ That make us slaves, and tell us 'tis our charter.*
- “ Jaff. *I think no safety can be here for virtue,  
 “ And grieve, my friend, as much as thou, to live  
 “ In such a wretched state as this of Venice,  
 “ Where all agree to spoil the public good,  
 “ And villains fatten with the brave man's labors.*
- “ Pierre. *We've neither safety, unity, nor peace;  
 “ For the foundation's lost of common good.  
 “ Justice is lame, as well as blind, amongst us;  
 “ The laws (corrupted to their ends that make 'em)  
 “ Serve but for instruments of some new tyranny  
 “ That ev'ry day starts up t' enslave us deeper.”*

Now, Citizens, that such a state of tyranny has frequently existed in Venice, nobody can doubt. That it does at this  
 time

time exist in many countries nobody can deny. That wherever it does exist it ought to be marked with public detestation, I cannot doubt; nor can I withhold my assent from the conclusion, that he who bears this patiently, and does not make use of every practicable effort to redress the sufferings of his fellow-citizens, is a villain: and that the wretch who props and advances such a system is a worse villain than the common plunderer who steals for bread; or even the common assassin, who, in the miserable situation to which some despotic countries are reduced, is obliged to shed the blood of his fellow men, that his own blood may not be drank by the slow and painful consumption of famine. I differ, it is true, as to the projects which, in other parts of this play, are pointed out as the means of redress. I would not set cities on fire, depopulate the streets, and murder affrighted individuals, endeavoring to escape from the flames; for I know that devastation is not reform. I would use no sword but reason; no flame but the torch of political enquiry: but my approbation of these sentiments is not the less just and proper because I differ from the characters that speak them as to the plans which in another part of the play are adopted under pretence of redress.

Such, Citizens, was the triumph of genuine and virtuous feeling in Otway's mind, over that servility and adulation with which he paid court to Charles the Second. Nor is the truth of these sentiments weakened because in another place, recollecting more correctly his object, which was to bring all principles of public virtue and liberty into disgrace, he classes the noble Brutus with the detestable Cataline.

"Friend," says *Pierre*, "Was not Brutus

"(I mean that Brutus who, in open senate,

"Stabb'd the first Cæsar that usurp'd the world)

"A gallant man?"

To this we shall all say "Yes," I make no doubt: for though we are now acquainted with better instruments of reform than the dagger, yet we cannot but admire the energy of Brutus, and the disinterested virtue with which he acted. But our feelings will, I trust, as unanimously revolt at the following passage.

"And Cataline, too,

"Tho' story wrong his fame; for he conspired

"To prop the reeling glory of his country?"

No. XLIX.

Z z

Cataline



Cataline and Cethegus may be held up by Serjeant Adair in comparison with those men who struggled for the liberty of their country; but I am not leveller enough to degrade the Brutuses and Cassiuses to the same standard as these detestable, ambitious, and rapacious conspirators.

I shall mention one instance more of this disposition among dramatic writers to pervert the facts of history, in a play of Cumberland's. How must we lament those political delusions which could occasion the author of "the West Indian," and the happy delineator of the energetic character of a *Penruddock*, (so admirably exhibited by Kemble in "the Wheel of Fortune,") to pay his court to greatness by degrading, as he has done in his "Battle of Hastings," so virtuous and so generous a character as the Lord Walthoef. This noble patriot seems to be introduced into that play for no other purpose than to make him an object of the most wanton calumny, to represent him as a man of intrigue, ambition, and capricious treachery. For this falsification of history there is no sort of apology in the plot or interest of the piece. The catastrophe is not in the least connected with his treachery; nor is any one situation in the least striking, or even one sentiment of the least value or importance produced by this immoral misrepresentation. We are told, indeed, by *Edwin*, in the last scene, when describing the overthrow of the English army, that

" A faithless band,  
" Led by Earl Walthoef, that still veering traitor,  
" Went over to the foe."

Yet it is not even hinted that the fate of the day depended in any measure upon this circumstance.

Now this very Walthoef, as we find by consulting the facts of history, was the man who stood more firmly in support of the liberties of his country than any one nobleman of the time,

Citizens, These misrepresentations are not without their object. It is one of the infallible signs of an age of degeneracy and usurpation, when courtly writers (and as such Mr. Cumberland must be regarded) ransack the pages of history, not to give due praise to merit, and the crown of civic honor to patriot virtue, but to cover with ignominy and contempt those characters whose generous exertions in the cause of freedom entitle them to the gratitude and admiration of mankind. Nor think me, Citizens, too nice and captious.

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It is not upon an individual instance that I found this reflection. There is an evident system of misrepresentations of this kind. The closet as well as the stage is haunted by these artful sophistries, these falsifications of ancient record; and history itself is made a lying prostitute to answer the purposes of corruption. It is but a little while since we had an elaborate work sent into the world with an *honorable name* in the title-page, apparently for no other purpose than to blast the well-earned fame of those patriots who sealed their attachment to their principles with their blood—to persuade us that Russell and Sidney were pensioners to the court of France, and that their brave and generous struggles to restore the liberty of their country, instead of the exertions of patriots, were the efforts of a prostituted foreign faction. Nay, even from that very period of history from which my former instance was selected, we have had another tragedy, from the pen of a grave, eminent, and learned divine (I mean the “*Matilda*” of Dr. Franklin) in which the obstinate resistance of the Earl of *Mercia* to the usurpation and tyranny of the *Norman Robber*, is represented as unpardonable rebellion; and in which, of course, the champion of English Rights, and English Independence, is delineated in all the odious colors that could disgust the audience with his cause. These circumstances are by no means strange or unaccountable. The Norman Tyrant, by the “*Battle of Hastings*,” and the subsequent suppression of Walthoef and other English nobles, overthrew the Saxon institutions of our ancestors, the charters of our ancient liberties, and established a feudal despotism on their ruins. It is easy, therefore, to perceive to which side *priests* and *courtiers* in the present age must be disposed to lean when the struggles of that æra are in contemplation.

Such then are the degrading arts of men who, conscious that their cause is bad, and aware that mankind are opening their eyes to enquiry, wish to delude them by misrepresentations, and the most gross calumnies and abuse. But nothing can be more dangerous than to confide in the popularity gained by these artifices. If we turn back the page of history, and see their consequences in former times, we find that such delusions are but of short duration. While the matchless genius of Dryden was endeavoring to make the very name of liberty odious; while in prologues and epilogues, tragedies, comedies, pantomimes, and farces, he was uphold-



upholding the cause of despotism; branding with the most infamous epithets every generous principle, endeavoring by declamations and witticisms to excite a thirst of vengeance and blood against the proscribed reformers of those days, and while these sentiments were hailed with hollow plaudits from every part of the theatre, in the midst of this apparent popularity the House of Stuart was sinking into ruin. The foundations of the fabric were undermined; and while boxes, pit, and gallery vied in apparent loyalty to the deluded James, William the Third landed, by almost general invitation, on our coasts, to push the supposed idol from his throne, and to punish those ministers who had deluded perhaps both their master and themselves into an opinion of unanimity, by a few hired wretches stationed at fit places to clap and applaud the fulsome panegyrics of hireling bards and pimping journalists. The fact is, that there is but one species of popularity that can be permanent or worth the cultivation of either prince or minister. It is that popularity which is obtained only by anxiously endeavoring to promote the happiness and welfare of the people, by attending to their moderate requests before they are made desperate by insolent refusal, and by diffusing the principles of liberty and equality practically among mankind. It is they who should disseminate those principles—it is they who should relieve, not aggravate, the burdens of the people—it is they who should extend the rights and privileges of the nation. Then will applause, affection, zeal, not only resound within the walls of a theatre, but be deeply engraven in the hearts of millions, benefited by a policy so humane and virtuous. And I shall not scruple to say, that though persons at this time frequent our public theatres who will applaud every sentiment inimical to liberty, and uphold every sentiment of adulation, yet that a fair and proper attention to the cries and necessities of the people, an immediate recantation of those blood-thirsty and ambitious sentiments which have produced the calamities of the present war, and above all things an immediate resolution to extend to the people their right to Annual Parliaments and Universal Suffrage, would be productive of ten thousand times more popularity and security than all the artifices that can be used to restrain the press, pervert the facts of history, and reduce to shameful prostitution the theatres and public amusements of the nation.



# THE TRIBUNE, N<sup>o</sup>. L.

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## FAREWEL ADDRESS:

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CITIZENS,

I HAVE now brought to a conclusion the third volume of this work. If health, and other circumstances, had permitted, it was my intention to have completed the collection to the time when the final passing of Mr. *Pitt's Convention Act* put a period to my "Lectures on the Laws, Constitution, and Government and Policy of *these Kingdoms*." But a variety of considerations compel me to relinquish this design. While these lectures continued, they afforded me a decent subsistence, which enabled me to indulge my desire of diffusing political information; by publishing this work upon a plan which, though attended with considerable expenditure, could yield but a scanty interest, even by the slow and distant returns of a very wide circulation. But the press, formerly but an auxiliary, must now be my chief dependence; and my attention must necessarily be directed to publications more conducive to literary reputation and personal emolument. This circumstance alone would not, however, have had sufficient weight to induce me to abridge my plan, if I had not been decided by others of more imperious necessity; and, particularly, by the circumstance of the confinement to the metropolis, and the regular application demanded by a periodical work; being totally inconsistent with every hope of firmly re-establishing my injured health. These considerations will, I trust, furnish a sufficient apology for my deviation from the *letter* of my promise, which was, that I would continue the periodical publication of the *Tribune* till the whole of the Political Lectures were before the Public; especially when it is considered, that the *spirit* of that promise is already fulfilled: my professed object being, that the public might be enabled to judge how far the doctrines and sentiments in these discourses merited the abuse with



which they have been branded by ministers and the tools of ministers; and how far they are in reality of such an alarming nature as to justify that abridgement of constitutional liberty, to which the country has been recently subjected. That judgment the public is now perfectly enabled to form: for I have brought down the lectures to the time when the Bill for their suppression was introduced into Parliament. This collection, then, with only three or four unimportant exceptions, contains the complete series, from the commencement of the first course after my acquittal from the charge of High Treason, to the time when the grand hue and cry was raised in the Houses of Lords and Commons against their supposed seditious and treasonable tendency. These exceptions, and the reasons that influenced me in the omission, I shall particularly specify, that the public may be satisfied that no motive at all connected with their imputed criminality was consulted in the suppression.

The first course commenced on Friday the 6th of February, 1795, with an enquiry into "the moral and political importance of the liberty of speech and of the press." But I had not then engaged a short-hand-writer; and that lecture, of course, could not be published. The three ensuing lectures were a recital of the defence intended to have been delivered at the bar of the Old Bailey; and are accordingly before the public, in my pamphlet entitled, "A Vindication of the Natural and Constitutional Right of Britons to Annual Parliaments," &c. On Wednesday, March 20, the recent death of my mother preventing my appearance in the tribune, Citizen *Hodgson* delivered, in my place, a very sensible discourse on the Constitution of this Country; which, however, as being in no respect my composition, I have not included in the collection. The only omissions, therefore, I have to account for to the public, are 1. The lectures "On Bigotry and Fanaticism," delivered on Good Friday (April 3) and the Wednesday following. 2. The lecture "On the Orders of the Privy Council for preventing Emigration" (April 24th). And 3. Three lectures "On the Difference between Party Spirit and Public Principle," delivered on the 15th, 20th, and 22d of May. The second of these articles was omitted, because, before the transcript came from the short-hand-writer's, the grievance complained of was removed; and there appeared no particular excellence in the lecture itself to entitle it (under such circumstances) to be rescued from oblivion. The first had been passed by for  
a while

a while to make way for lectures of a more temporary nature: and as the matter of these two discourses is in some degree detached, and three more have been delivered on the same subject, during my course of *Lectures on Classical History*, I feel disposed to work them up, altogether, into a distinct treatise, and submit them at some future time to the world, in another form. In withholding the Lectures on Party Spirit, I have been actuated by a motive of a different kind—a motive which, perhaps, the petulant and headstrong may disapprove; but which is, nevertheless, I believe, perfectly consistent with those principles of *Sans-culottism* which I still continue to profess with unabated ardor and sincerity. My hearers will remember, and indeed the title will sufficiently indicate, the tone and complexion of those lectures. They contain, I believe, nothing but what the situation of affairs, and the conduct of the respective parties fully justified: but, if I am not misinformed, they occasioned some foreboding to men, who have *since*, upon one grand question in particular, acted with a degree of spirit and firmness which entitles them, in common justice, to a degree of indulgence for past failings; and whoever shall attentively peruse the debates of Friday, the 8th inst. upon the subject of "Barracks," and Monday the 12th, upon the "Slave Trade," will, I think, admit with me the probability that some of these men are really disposed (at least for the present) to lend their support to principles more consistent with the interests of liberty than those half-way measures, and shuffling evasions, which were formerly, and I think justly, the object of such severe animadversion among real reformers. I may be mistaken in these favorable opinions; and certainly I am not at all disposed to part with that jealous watchfulness, which, in spite of a constitutional disposition to trust and confidence, the conduct of political leaders has compelled one to adopt. But I believe, so long as this scrutinizing jealousy, as to conduct, is observed, it is both wise and generous to give men credit for a good motive, so long as they are acting well. At any rate, I am convinced that *any hostility* to these men, at this time, would be equally unwise, as to the public cause, and unjust to the individuals. Between confidence and attack there are many degrees of choice; and it is, I believe, a salutary maxim, never to confide in any man or set of men, but when the situation of affairs makes it absolutely necessary; but at the same time, never to attack, but when there is a clear and evident failure of public duty. It is upon these



considerations that I lay, for the present, upon the shelf the lectures on the difference between party spirit and public principle; that if certain individuals animadverted upon therein, should realize the expectations they have lately raised, these strictures may sink into oblivion; but, if the reverse should be the case, they may come forward, at a proper season, with such additions as the circumstances of the times may render necessary.

Having thus far discharged my duty to the public, by putting them in full possession of the documents necessary to decide the question at issue, I trust I may be excused, under all the circumstances of the case, for delaying the remaining parts of the work, till leisure and fit opportunity enable me to send them into the world in some convenient form, and in a more correct state, than the hasty publication of the preceding pages would admit. That the collection should be completed at some period or other, is certainly my serious intention: several reasons rendering me far from desirous that the remaining lectures should be suppressed. They are, I believe, in several points of view, the best that I have delivered. They do not indeed contain that mass of facts which I sometimes flatter myself will bestow a sort of permanent value upon the latter half of the second, and the former of this third volume; but they have, I believe, the advantage of entering more boldly into the discussion of principle, and breathing more enthusiasm than almost any of the preceding. Indeed, from the circumstance of being delivered on the spur of an awful and momentous crisis, and upon a subject which had excited universal interest and agitation, they might naturally be expected to have more of passion—more of that fire of expression, and that rapid energy of conception and arrangement, which constitute the soul of oratory. In short, (to compare small things with great) they are the "*Philippics*" of my humble collection; and I must be insensible indeed to the voice of popularity, if I could wish them to be buried and forgotten, while the rest are abroad and remembered. But the question that produced those lectures will undoubtedly be revived. It is not, depend upon it, gone to sleep for ever. That revival will be a proper time for the publication of my remaining volume; and, at that time, if other indispensable engagements do not intervene, that volume shall make its appearance. In the mean time, all that the Minister, all that the Attorney General, all that the advocates for the late Bills can wish, is presented to their inspection; and an

an important question is at issue before the public. If the lectures delivered, during the preceding year, at *Beaufort Buildings*, are really of that seditious, inflammatory, and treasonable nature, which the minister and his adherents have represented, what must be the deserts of the flagitious individual by whom they were delivered?—What must be his audacity—nay, his folly—his madness, not only in taking such precautions to render every word that he uttered susceptible of the most positive proof, but in bringing all these proofs to the bar of the public, and challenging investigation, in the very teeth of power? If, on the contrary, these lectures are not of the complexion which the minister and his tools have so vehemently described—If, instead of treason and sedition, they contain only the principles of reason, truth, and justice—If, instead of provoking to violence and commotion, they enforce the principles of peace, humanity, and good order—If, instead of stirring up *hatred* and *dislike* to his Majesty's person and government, they only expose the peculations and mal practices of those worst traitors and enemies to their King and Country, a corrupt, profligate, and sanguinary administration, what must the public conclude with respect to those ministers?—What will posterity—[nay, let us hope that every thing will not be left to posterity!—let not us be to our descendants an unprofitable and accursed ancestry, bequeathing to them nothing but the necessity of remedying the mischiefs produced by our supineness!—what must the present generation (as soon as it has opened its eyes) say to the men who have thus slandered an innocent individual, and held him up as an object of terror and abhorrence, that, through his sides, they might stab the constitutional liberty of their country, and, under pretence of suppressing his supposed dangerous and illegal doctrines, lay prostrate the dearest rights and privileges of the people?

This is no personal question. It is of considerable magnitude to the public. Under such circumstances, to shelter myself from enquiry were base and treacherous cowardice. I have not so sheltered myself. The public are entitled to the whole evidence. The whole evidence lays before them: all, at least, that can be of any importance as to the decision. Of some few of the earlier lectures, it is true, *extracts* only are printed; because in the earlier lectures, in particular, there were many feeble passages, not worth preserving. It is only by practice, application,  
and



and the habit of revision, that we are able to give to oral effusion the consistency and unity essential to a printed discourse. The rest, it must also be admitted, have undergone some slight corrections; but these alterations are either merely critical, or have been adopted not to soften, but to increase the force and strength of the expression, and supply the defects which tone and gesticulation might cover in the delivery: and as the original transcripts from the short-hand writer's notes are preserved in my library, these are, also, *according to present practice*, within the reach of Government, if the authenticity of the printed copies should be called in question. Have I not a right, then, to expect—nay, to *demand*, that, these documents being thus fairly produced, and my responsibility to the laws (if indeed I have offended them) thus facilitated, the unjust restrictions laid upon the intellectual freedom of my unoffending country should be instantly removed, and the vengeance of the Minister (if vengeance for these Lectures can be due) should be directed against my devoted head, and mine alone?

I now take leave, for the present, of the *Political Lectures*, and shall conclude this volume with a few particulars respecting the undertaking in which I have been more recently engaged.

In my little pamphlet, entitled “*Prospectus of a Course of Lectures in strict Conformity with Mr. Pitt's Convention Act*,” I have sufficiently explained the nature and legality of this undertaking; and perhaps it may not be improper, in this place, to insert the following passage from that publication.

“It is essential to mark with some degree of accuracy what is and what is not forbidden by this act: for although it is not the part of a good citizen to violate, from *individual* caprice, the provisions of a *general* law, (whatever may be his opinion of the government by which it was made) it is certainly his duty to embrace every opportunity which the Legislature has not prohibited, of promoting principles conducive to the general happiness of mankind. In short, nothing (except intemperate violence) can be so injurious to the public cause, as that cringing timidity with which we so frequently meet Oppression, as it were, half way; and when a part of our rights is violently taken from us, forbear, with what is miscalled prudential caution, to exercise even those that remain. This is, in reality,

reality, courting slavery. It is saying to the Minister, "You have over-rated the courage, spirit, and intelligence of the nation. Your invasions of public liberty are too tame and cautious. You were fearful lest the present burthen should be intolerable; but our necks are formed for a heavier yoke; and though there are bounds to your presumption, there shall be none to our servility: take, therefore, as our gift, the little liberty you left, and let us become ENTIRELY THE THING YOU WISH US, though you had not the courage to attempt to make us so."

"If this should be the conduct of my countrymen, with respect to these bills, at least they shall not have to reproach me for the example. *I will not*, in my present disposition at least, *violate the Law*; but I will continue to obey the dictates of my own conscience, and promote the important cause of popular discussion in *such ways as the Law has not yet forbidden*; and perhaps it will be found upon serious consideration, that the field is yet ample, and the harvest promising." Pa. 13, &c.

Whether this concluding sentiment was well founded, will be best illustrated by the following list of subjects successively descanted upon in that course.

LECTURE I. The importance of the *study of History* in general, and of Roman History in particular.

LECT. II. The *rise, progress, and decline of Roman grandeur*. Its obscure beginnings, unexampled triumphs, and unparalleled degeneracy. Including a review of the *consequences of corruption*.

LECT. III. The Regal Government (or limited *Monarchy*) of ancient Rome; its advantages and defects. with strictures on *elective and hereditary Royalty*; and a digression on the *Constitution and fate of Poland*.

LECT. IV. Further Animadversions on the Regal Government; and the *subserviency of Priestcraft to the usurpations of prerogative*: with digressions on the Republican Governments of *America and France*.

LECT. V. The *abuses of Kingly power*, and arbitrary usurpations which occasioned the *extermination of Royalty*.

LECT. VI. A refutation of the pretences for depriving the Romans of their *natural and Constitutional right of equal universal suffrage*; with a further exposition of the arbitrary usurpations which led to the abolition of Royalty; and parallels between that event, and the Revolutions in *France and Holland*.

LECT.



LECT. VII. The *Expulsion of the Tarquins*; with Reflections on the principal Revolutions which have produced the Overthrow of Regal and Monarchic Governments in the Ancient and Modern World.

LECT. VIII. The Folly and Wickedness of the *Confederacy of Kings* to overthrow the Roman Republic, and restore the Tyranny of the Tarquins.

LECT. IX. Further Animadversions on the *Combination of Kings for the Restoration of Despotism* in Rome: with a Digression on the *Destruction of the Military and Naval Armaments* of Xerxes; and the Causes that rendered the little Republics of Antiquity victorious over the greatest Monarchies.

LECT. X. The *Arrogance, Rapacity, and Usurpations of the Roman Aristocracy*, and consequent Depression and Misery of the People.

LECT. XI. The *Commutations produced by the Tyranny of the Government*, and consequent Emigration of the People to the Sacred Mount: including a Vindication of the Right of Popular Association.

LECT. XII. The Defects of the Tribunitian Institution, or *Popular Representation* of Rome; its Abuses and Corruptions.

LECT. XIII. The *Fasts and Superstitions* of Ancient Rome.

LECT. XIV. The Causes and Consequences of the *Seditions of Rome*; with an Enquiry into the Circumstances that produced the different Character of the *Roman* and the *French Revolutions*.

LECT. XV. A Continuation of the Enquiry into the Causes and Consequences of the Seditions of Rome: with Reflections on the *Suppression of Popular Discussion*.

LECT. XVI. The Difference between *Ancient and Modern Democracies*, illustrated by the Examples of Athens and Sparta—of Rome—of America, &c. with a particular Reply to *Burke's Calumnies* against the French Revolution.

LECT. XVII. A further *Vindication of the French Revolution* against the fanatical Ravings of Edmund Burke.

LECT. XVIII. *Corruption and Tyranny* the real Causes of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire: with an Enquiry into the Circumstances that have subjected Nations to Overthrow by *Foreign Invasion*.

LECT.

LECT. XIX. and XX. Further Animadversions on the Fasts and Superstitions of Ancient Rome; with an Exposition of the *juggling Impositions and Forgeries of Priestcraft*, and their Subserviency to the Ambition and Rapacity of Tyrannical Rulers: exemplified by instances selected from the histories of *all Nations, except THESE KINGDOMS*—upon which, (and *which alone*) it is now unlawful to lecture.

Spies and Emissaries were, according to practice, employed to attend these lectures. I have the authority (at second hand) of the *Secretary of a Secretary of State*, for affirming, that two reporters were regularly stationed on the part of Government to keep close watch upon me; and several abortive attempts (which furnished excellent matter of pleasantry and digression) were made to disturb the company and discompose the lecturer; but the whole course was completed, according to the original proposals, without the least attempt at legal interruption. In order still further to convince the public of the legality of such investigations, I have since, in compliance with my promise, published the following Address in "The Morning Post," and "Telegraph" of Monday last.

### *Lectures on Classical History.*

AT the close of my Course of *Lectures on Classical History*, I promised my audience to address them through the medium of the Public Papers; assigning as my reason, the necessity of dwelling upon some particulars to which, in my character of a Public Lecturer, I was no longer at liberty to allude. Three weeks have now passed since this promise was made: and those few who felt any curiosity upon the subject, may perhaps suppose that my intention is altogether abandoned. Promises do not, however, set so lightly upon my shoulders: and though I do not believe that superior duties ought to be dispensed with, because we may have pledged ourselves to others of an inferior nature, yet I am convinced that engagements of this kind ought so far to be sacred, that nothing but the pressure of superior obligations



should be admitted in apology for their neglect. By such obligations—by the requisite attention to a periodical work, which, under *existing circumstances*, I thought myself bound, in justice to my abused and deluded country, to complete; and by the strong necessity of seeking, in relaxation and exercise, at least a partial restoration of that health, which a long series of exertion had so considerably deranged, the fulfilment of my promise has been hitherto suspended. The former of these obligations being nearly discharged, and the object of the latter as far attained as can be well expected till the dismissal of other engagements shall permit me to breathe for a while a purer atmosphere, I take this opportunity of addressing a few words to the Public on the nature and objects of my late undertaking.

The General Plan of these Lectures has been already explained in my "Prospectus;" and if it has not been sufficiently illustrated in the practice (to those at least who had the *courage* to attend) it would be in vain to expatiate upon it at this time. My motive with respect to the Public (as I declared in my introductory Lecture) was precisely the same which had actuated my former exertions—namely, the diffusion of political information; or, in other words, the cultivation of the science of Government and Legislation. I had also another very important object in view, which I imagined must be sufficiently obvious from the very complexion of the undertaking—that is to say, to shew the Public that if we have discrimination and courage at once to obey the law and persevere in every unprohibited *duty*, it is impossible for Ministers to frame restrictions that can effectually impede the progress of truth, and consequent reform. It is not with the mind as with a district, whose passes and highways are marked and measured by the mechanical accuracy of the surveyor. It is not the stationing of a troop of dragoons at this or the other turnpike that can stop the excursions of the resolute and intelligent traveller. It is rather with mind as with the ocean. We may indeed draw what imaginary lines we please upon the *chart*, and place, as we list, our guard-ships and vessels of observation; but the waves flow on regardless of these limits, and the billows continue to swell in mockery of our vain pretensions. It is high road every where. It is open alike to every minute point of the compass; and the mariner who makes himself acquainted with the number and stations of his foes, can  
never

never find it difficult to elude their snares, and pursue his intended voyage. To speak without metaphor—those who aim at despotism dare not avow their real object. They are obliged to appeal to subterfuges and false pretences. The almost inevitable consequence is, that the laws and restrictions founded upon these pretences are inadequate to the real purpose; and instead of suppressing the activity of the enlightened friend of human happiness, only compel him to vary the mode of his exertions. This is particularly the case with respect to these ever to be remembered Bills. That some of the persons concerned in the fabrication of those instruments intended thereby to suppress all political discussion, all diffusion of popular science, all exposition of the vices of tyranny and corruption, all enquiry into the principles of government, and, consequently, all possibility of rational reform, cannot at all be doubted. This is evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, and in particular from the doctrines and sentiments advanced in the discussion. But it is also equally evident, that the Acts which have received the sanction of the Legislature are perfectly inadequate to these ends; unless the people, by their supineness and pusillanimity, confer upon the Minister a degree of power which he either had not the cunning, or the courage, to grasp. In short, notwithstanding the formidable appearance and ambiguous principle of these Bills, when they are accurately examined, it will be found that there is scarcely a measure important to the cause of freedom which may not still be adopted and pursued, if we have but the spirit to exercise, with boldness and discretion, the privileges that still remain: and if we have not this spirit, why do we complain? Why do we murmur at the usurpations of Ministers, and sigh for greater freedom, when we have not the courage, or the intelligence, to make use of what we have? If such is our supineness, we are “a race prepared for slavery;” and all that remains for us, is to sit down silently under our chains, and wait, with patient resignation, till our oppressors shall be pleased to forge us more!

It is not a mere vague opinion that I am now delivering. I have given a practical illustration of the truth I teach. Without violating any one provision of the act, levelled so directly against my Lectures, I have delivered, without impeachment or interruption, a new course, different in form,



but the same in principle, with those I had before delivered, I have discussed the merits and defects of the Regal, the Aristocratic, and the Democratic branches of government; the right of universal suffrage, the expediency of annual elections, the inalienable sovereignty of the people, and the futility of the *exterior forms and pretences of a free Constitution*, while corruption and influence, within, are exercising their *secret despotism*. I have vindicated the rights and dignity of man against the calumnies of aristocratic ignorance, replied to the objections against popular associations, illustrated the dangerous tendency of regal and ministerial usurpations, and justified the Revolutions that proceed (as all Revolutions hitherto have proceeded) from the oppressions of government. And although some persons may weakly suppose that these arguments would not be felt, because built upon the foundations of ancient and foreign history, let it be remembered, that principles are eternal, and that it is hardly possible for modern usurpation to invent any species of oppression of which parallel examples may not be found in the history of the ancient world. Let it be remembered, that *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* has informed us, in the fourth book of his "Roman Antiquities," that Tarquin the Proud "made a law to forbid the holding of any of the assemblies, "to which, before, the inhabitants of the villages, the members of the curiæ, or the neighbors, both in the city and "in the country, used to resort;—left a number of people, "when met together, should form secret conspiracies to "dethrone him;" that he had, also, "in many places, "Spies and Inquirers into every thing that was said and "done, who were undiscovered by the generality of the "people, and by insinuating themselves into the company "of their neighbors, and sometimes by reviling the Tyrant "themselves, sounded every man's sentiments. After which "they informed the Tyrant of all who were dissatisfied with "the present situation of affairs; and those who were convicted of *this crime* were punished in a severe and unrelenting measure;" that he suborned the most profligate of his faction "to accuse many considerable men of capital "crimes;"—that "when the accusers brought these men "to their trial, they charged them, one after another, with "fictitious crimes, but chiefly with a conspiracy against the "King;"—that he "condemned some of them to death, "and others to banishment;"—and that, for these and other

other acts of oppression, Tarquin was driven from the throne, loaded with the unanimous execration of the people; as, perhaps, at no very distant period, the Minister of this country may be driven from that high station, where it is still lawful to say, *in print*, that he grasps and exercises a power equally incompatible with the character of the *Citizen* of a *free*, or the *Subject* of a *regal State*.

Nor is it one period alone of Roman history that furnishes us with interesting parallels. Every page is eloquent in condemnation of the present system. Let it be remembered, that the Empire, as well as the Regal Government, had its age of corruption and tyranny; its spies and informers; its system of organized perjury: that *Tacitus* as well as *Dionysius* has had his share in writing the history of Mr. *Pitt's* administration;—that, in the *good times* of *Tiberius*, there was a proud, insolent, cruel, and usurping minister (one *Sejanus*) who had, also, his gang of profligate *Reporters*, with a time-serving, place-hunting, blood-sucking *Rufinus* at their head, to organize them into district committees, and fabricate false plots of treason; and that while these real conspirators pretended to be making laws and regulations “for the better preservation of the person and government” of the deluded Emperor, they were in reality taking measures for transferring the whole power and sovereignty of the empire into their own hands, and those of their abandoned faction.

In short, cases in point might be quoted that would fill a huge folio; nor would it be difficult to compose a political history of the present times, made up entirely of quotations from ancient historians. Well might “the Times” and “the True Briton” exclaim—“If these Lectures are suffered to go on, the late act is mere dead letter;” and yet the Lectures have gone on; the course has been completed; and there is no law in this country to prevent the repetition of such discussions. May I not then say with justice—“I have fought a good fight”—I have obtained a proud victory, of which, if others have the spirit to pursue it, Liberty and my Country may reap the advantage? For myself, I bear away no trophies but my scars. The victory has been purchased by the sacrifice alike of time, and health, and ease, and property.

I have now adjourned these Lectures for six months.—During that time their legality will be substantiated beyond all possibility of doubt: for the Act has provided “That

“no



“no person shall be prosecuted by virtue of this Act, unless  
 “such prosecution shall be commenced within six calendar  
 “months after the offence committed; and no action  
 “shall be brought for any of the penalties by this Act im-  
 “posed, unless the same shall be brought within three calendar  
 “months next after the offence committed.” Now the consequences of prosecution, if well founded, would be—imprisonment, pillory, and all the disgraceful *et cetera* attached to the keeping of a disorderly house; and the penalties, under each action, are 100*l.* and costs; that is to say, for the twenty lectures, 2000*l.* and perhaps as much more for costs of suit; penalties which, to a man in my circumstances, must be inevitable and irretrievable destruction. Now, is it probable that the Attorney General, the Police Magistrates, and those Old Bailey *Confidants of Gentlemen high in Office*, vulgarly ycleped *Informers*, all should love me so well as to pass by such an opportunity of overwhelming me with hopeless ruin? If not, what is the conclusion?—That they neither prosecute nor bring their actions, because they know that my *Lectures were completely and indubitably legal*. Till the time for such actions and such prosecution expire, I retire in silence. If, at the end of that time, the Lectures are not resumed, the fault will be in the public, not in me. I have discharged my duty—I have tried the question; and shall always be ready to do my part towards following up the principle thus established.

JOHN THELWALL.

Beaufort Buildings,  
 16th April, 1796.

It was my intention to give as wide circulation to the above Address as possible; and, as there were five papers (the Morning Chronicle, Morning Herald, Morning Post, Telegraph, & Gazetteer) in which I had constantly advertised three times a week, and sometimes four or five, during the whole season, I thought I had a sort of claim upon them, in common civility and reciprocation: as for other papers, in which I had only occasionally advertised, I did not expect it from them, and therefore made no application. It was only, however, by the Morning Post and Telegraph (justly entitled to liberal countenance, for their readiness to insert any article that

that can tend to promote the popular cause) that I was not disappointed. For the Morning Chronicle, in particular, it seems it did not smack sufficiently of *party*. It was not *Fox* against *Pitt*, nor *Whig* against *Tory*; and the proprietors, perhaps, find it difficult to persuade themselves that any thing else will suit the palate of their readers: and yet, if I am not misinformed, this narrow principle is no more consistent with the present *wishes*, than with the interests of their patrons. But it seems these Journalists deemed it a very imprudent paper. It might stimulate Government to take away the little freedom that yet remains.—Genius of Common Sense! what mode of argument is this? “If you let the people know what liberties, rights, and privileges are yet left, and stimulate them to the exercise of those privileges, Government will take them away!!!”—Will it so? Then the sooner they are taken away the better; for, in any *political or practical point of view*, where is the difference whether we have no liberties at all, or whether we have liberties which we have neither the courage nor the intelligence to enjoy? But, in point of *moral consideration*, surely it is better to have no privileges, than to be too base, and too ignorant, to exercise them. For my own part, I would rather be a galley-slave, fettered for life to the oar of ignominy and oppression, where my submission would have the moral excuse of inevitable necessity, than the member of a self-enslaved community, without virtue or courage to exercise those rights of which it had surpassed even the audacity of arbitrary encroachment to deprive me.

Spirit of our heroic ancestors, whither art thou flown? Venerable names of *Hampden*, *Pym*, and *Sidney*, have ye lost your charm? Ye *Ruffels*, ye patriots, whose blood has streamed upon the scaffold, the victims of legally-resisted Tyranny!—do your ghosts still hover over this devoted country, still conscious of the scenes below? With what passions must ye behold your degenerate sons, outstripping, in the race of infamous submission, even the rapid encroachments of a usurping minister! With what anguish must ye regard a race of Britons so sunk in vile and cowardly corruption, as to deem it prudent to make a voluntary surrender of their liberties, lest, if they should dare to exercise them, they should be taken away!—No—no—ye martyred patriots! At such a prospect your afflicted souls would bleed anew. 'Tis mercy to your *manes* to hope for annihilation.

20th April, 1796.



*The following Works of J. THELWALL may be had, whole-sale or retail, of H. D. Symonds.*

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